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THE ARABS AND THE TURKS.

Their Origin and History,

THEIR RELIGION, THEIR IMPERIAL GREATNESS IN THE PAST, AND THEIR CONDITION AT THE PRESENT TIME,

WITH

CHAPTERS ON THE OTHER NON-CHRISTIAN TRIBES OF WESTERN ASIA.

By EDSON L. CLARK,

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY.

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THE present volume is the first part of a more extended work undertaken by the author, in the hope of placing before the Christian public the means to a better knowledge of our great missionary field in the Turkish Empire than can be obtained from sources now generally accessible. Should this volume be favorably received, others may follow upon the Christian races and sects of European and Asiatic Turkey.

NORTH BRANFORD, CONN.,
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THE ARABS AND THE TURKS.

CHAPTER I.

CHRISTIAN ROME.

TO understand the place and part of Mohammedanism in history, we shall need first to trace the decay of that great Christian society which it in part supplanted.

The great era in the world's history, which marks the beginning of the course of events we are now to consider, was the year 324; a year made memorable not only by the accession of Constantine to the undivided government of the Roman Empire, but by the founding of Constantinople, a city destined to remain, to the successors of Constantine, a seat of imperial power and splendor for eleven hundred years.

Up to this time the Roman Empire had been a Pagan state. Every Emperor thus far had been a worshipper of the ancient gods of Rome; and a vast majority of the people still adhered to the old religion. Gibbon concludes, seemingly with good reason,

that, at the conversion of Constantine, not more than one-twentieth of the population of the Empire were avowedly Christian. But it was true, nevertheless, that in this small minority lay the strength and life of the Empire. The old religion stood a majestic fabric, seemingly as strong as ever; but it was a stately form from which life had departed, ready to crumble to dust at a single blow. The Christian Church, on the other hand, formed at this time a thoroughly organized body full of energy and health.

Hitherto the Church had preserved, in a good degree, its purity and its sacred life. A small and unpopular party in the State, always subject to the salutary opposition, if not the hostility, of the government, there was little inducement to join its numbers, except to those moved by sincere conviction. The Church had thus always remained an honest and earnest body. As yet the degeneracy which was to work its ruin had made but little progress. As a community, the Church of the third century presented, both morally and socially, a spectacle of excellence and well-being to which the previous history of mankind could furnish no parallel. The clergy, as a body, were able, pious, and faithful. The people were well instructed in the Scriptures, virtuous, and sincere. The Christians of that age lived in charity with one another and with all mankind. One of them travelling abroad needed only his certificate of church-membership, to secure to him the generous hospitality and kindly offices of his brethren in all parts of the

Empire. In times of deadly pestilence, when the heathen, in a selfish horror of the disease, were casting their dead and dying relatives into the streets, it was common to see the Christians, with a generous self-devotion, not only caring for their own stricken friends, but burying the dead and nursing the neglected sick of their heathen neighbors. If, as often happened, some great calamity overtook the churches of some particular district, their call for help was sure to meet a generous response from their sister churches. In a word, the Christian community of that age was a true and living Church of Christ, a shining light in the midst of a heathen world.

But, while this is true, it is also true that those corruptions, which were destined soon after to reach so great a development, were already creeping into the Church, the inevitable products of a decaying, sinking age. The whole fabric of the Roman Empire, both political and social, was organized upon false principles, which doomed it to destruction. Even Christianity could not save it; and it was a sad necessity, that, sinking itself, the Church should sink with it.

Towards the close of the third century, two evil tendencies, the necessary results of the circumstances of the times, were becoming manifest in the Church; one to ecclesiastical despotism, the other to asceticism and an undue trust in rites and forms. In the political world, despotic power now reigned with an authority as absolute as it was universal. So complete was the enslavement of the human mind at this time, that no

man, whether Pagan or Christian, seems to have dreamed that it was possible to organize and govern the State on any other principle than that of unqualified despotism. But among a people living thus, without either the possession or the idea of civil freedom, religious liberty could not long exist. That absolute authority to which in the State they were accustomed to yield so unquestioning an obedience, they would naturally and willingly suffer to be established over them in the Church. This great change in the constitution of the Church had been to a great extent actually accomplished by the end of the third century. The simple pastors and teachers of the early Church had grown into lordly bishops, claiming and exercising the right to govern the Church, in all things spiritual, with unlimited authority.

Yet, in the circumstances of the case, this re-organization of the Church upon the monarchical principle was evidently so overruled by a divine Providence that good came out of the evil. There were times coming when this concentrated, well-established power of the bishops would prove to the people a strong defence against overwhelming evils, the best refuge not only of the Church, but of society itself.

Let us now turn to consider the tendency, already manifest in the Church, to asceticism and superstition. One of the saddest results of the degeneracy of the age was the gradual obscuring of the light of knowledge. The human intellect was becoming darkened. Among the followers of the old religion, great thinkers

and writers no longer appeared. Not only was nothing new produced: men were losing the power to see clearly and hold firmly what they already possessed. Their intellectual life had become sterile. This growing weakness of a decaying age affected the Christian part of the Roman people, as well as their heathen neighbors, though to a less degree. It could not be but that the intellect of the Church should feel to some extent the heavy, deadening pressure of the times. We accordingly find, that, in the latter part of the third century, the Church was beginning to lose, in some measure, its clear apprehension of the simple truths of the gospel. Faith in Christ was beginning to give place to a trust in rites and forms. Baptism was coming to be regarded as a saving ordinance, by its own inherent efficacy washing away all sin. Monasticism did not yet exist; but throughout the Church there was a strong and growing tendency to asceticism. Fasts were multiplied, both public and private; and Christians generally were learning to regard voluntary penances, and mortifications of the flesh, as most valuable means to the sanctification of the soul. These were the seeds out of which, in the next century, the monastic life was to spring up with a sudden and wonderful growth.

Such were the circumstances of the Christian Church, when that great revolution took place which raised it at once from comparative weakness and poverty, to boundless wealth and imperial dominion.

For a long time the sovereignty of the Empire had

been in the hands of soldiers. Every ambitious and successful general aspired to the imperial purple ; and often several would-be Emperors were struggling at once for the mighty prize, rending by their conflicts the very vitals of the Empire. In the year 308, six Emperors disputed among themselves the dominion of the Roman world. One of these was Constantine, a man destined to revolutionize not the religion alone, but the whole political structure, of the Empire. The father of Constantine was Constantius Chlorus, an able and virtuous general, who, with the title of Cæsar, had been invested with a share of imperial authority over the distant provinces of the West. Dying in the year 306, at York in Britain, his army at once hailed his son Constantine as their sovereign.

With perhaps some sincere convictions of the truth of Christianity, Constantine had the sagacity to see that the real strength of the Empire lay with the Christian party. Availing himself of this fact, he raised the standard of the cross, and proclaimed himself the champion of Christianity. Then followed a long and bloody struggle, but one sad instance of the many which fill the melancholy annals of those times, which resulted at last in raising Constantine to supreme dominion.

To the Christians of that age, this event naturally seemed glorious indeed, and fraught with the promise of untold blessings for the future. The world was to see for the first time a Christian state. Now it would

appear what Christianity could do for society when elevated to supreme control. Not unnaturally the Christians imagined that the virtues which had hitherto adorned the Church would thenceforward characterize their government, and bless and beautify the whole structure of society. Their officers would be peace, and their exactors righteousness. War and dissension would cease in a Christian Empire. Vice and wickedness would be everywhere restrained; virtue and piety would everywhere prevail. Such were the hopes inspired in his Christian subjects by the accession of Constantine, — hopes excited only to be bitterly disappointed. For three hundred years the Christian Church, poor and weak, always opposed and often persecuted by the civil power, had flourished in vigor and spiritual health. Now all was changed. She had ascended the throne of the Cæsars, and supreme dominion rested peacefully in her hands. But her triumph was her ruin. Three causes conspired to produce this result: —

1. The Church was completely overwhelmed by the sudden accession of that vast, dissolute, and worthless multitude which had hitherto adhered to the old religion, but now, following in the wake of wealth and power, assumed the garb without any thing of the spirit of Christianity. Perhaps a twentieth part of the people were Christians by sincere conviction. But to this inconsiderable minority were now suddenly added probably three-fourths of the whole population. What wonder that the life of the Church

should be swallowed up and lost in this vast deluge of nominal Christianity but real heathenism?

2. After the accession of Constantine, the Christian bishops were suddenly elevated to positions of great dignity and power, becoming, in fact, the most influential men in the Empire. So far as the unhappy Church was concerned, this was in every respect a change for the worse. Not only did the bishops now fix their yoke more firmly than ever upon the necks of the prostrate churches, but they soon began to be stained with wickedness and crime. Synods and Councils were disgraced by shameless corruption and outrageous violence. True, this degeneracy of the episcopal order was by no means universal. Upon the roll of bishops, even at a much later date, are found many of the noblest and purest names which adorned the ancient Church. But, unhappily, the worst men were often able to rise to the highest positions, to exert the most commanding power, were but too successful in filling the Church with their own spirit. This elevation and subsequent corruption of the episcopal order was the chief cause of the ruin of the Church. If the bishops of the fourth century, as a body, had been men of fervent apostolic piety, the religion of the Church might have proved a leaven strong enough to pervade and save the whole body of society. But this could not be. The unhappy circumstances of the times had made them bishops, had clothed them with great power, had subjected them to temptations greater

than human nature has ever been able to bear. The great episcopal offices came to be prizes eagerly striven for by the most ambitious and unscrupulous men. It thus followed, that, as the power of the bishops grew constantly more absolute, their character became, in the same degree, more venal and corrupt.

3. The mischief of the ecclesiastical despotism of the bishops was sustained and made complete by the civil and political despotism of the Emperors. The obsequious servility of the times allowed the Emperors to assume prerogatives and authority hardly less than divine. The Emperor was not only the sole repository of all political power, but the sovereign arbiter of all right and truth. His decree could fix or change the faith of the Church as well as the civil law.[1] Thus, under the united despotisms of the bishops and the Emperor, the last vestige of freedom disappeared, as well from the Church as from society. The religion of the Church came to be nothing more than an enforced assent to a set of dogmas fixed for every man by the iron hand of power, and from

[1] The first Christian Emperors did not push their claims of ecclesiastical authority to this extent. They convened the Councils of the Church, and often sought to control both them and their decisions. Zeno, in the year 482, one hundred and fifty years after the accession of Constantine, was the first Emperor who presumed to fix, by an imperial decree, the faith of the Church; but much earlier than this the Emperors had begun to assume the prerogative of settling by their own sovereign authority the controversies upon points of both administration and doctrine, which distracted the Church. In the year 418 an imperial rescript was issued by the Emperor Honorius, condemning the doctrines of Pelagius. Other edicts of the same emperor regulated the election of the bishops of Rome. — See MILMAN'S *Latin Christianity*, New York edition, vol. i. pp. 183, 199, 323.

which he must not presume to differ even by a hair's breadth.

From these causes the decay of the Church, after the accession of Constantine, became fearfully rapid. The most striking indication of that decay was seen in the springing-up, and the prodigious growth, of the monastic order. We have seen that, in the third century, ascetic ideas and principles were already gaining a strong foothold in the Church. It was about the beginning of the fourth century, that the practice of those principles began to be carried to the extent of voluntary and entire seclusion from the world, and the attempted suppression of every desire of the flesh; and so rapid was the movement, that, before the end of the century, it is said, half the population of Egypt had embraced the monastic life. It was much the same in all parts of the Christian world. Every province of the Empire was soon filled with monasteries, or rather hermitages and monks.

The cause of this great movement must have been something deeply seated in the circumstances of the age. It was twofold.

It sprung primarily from that great change in the views of the Church, resulting from the gradual obscuring of the simple truth of the gospel, which was transferring the power of religion from the spirit to the letter, — from faith in Christ to outward forms, and mortifications of the flesh.

But this movement was also a despairing flight from the degenerate society of a sinking age. The times

were out of joint. Society was hopelessly diseased: its very foundations seemed about to break up. The signs of approaching dissolution were visible on every hand. Thoughtful men became oppressed with deep despondency; and, despairing of a world which they could not save, they fled from its troubles and burdens, and thought only of preparing for another and a better.

The results of this great development of the monastic life to society at large were very disastrous. Not only did it withdraw from the duties of active life, and from the healthful influence which they ought to have exerted in society, a great multitude of the best men of the age; but in the immense numbers of illiterate, bigoted, and half-savage monks which swarmed throughout the Empire, every ambitious and unscrupulous bishop found ready to his hand a host of fanatical and devoted followers, upon whom he could depend in every emergeney. Of this fact a striking illustration was given in those infamous "Robber Councils," through which Cyril and Dioscurus of Alexandria secured the condemnation of their great rival Nestorius.

But by far the worst result of this movement was the almost entire separation which it effected between the practice of religion and the every-day activities and relations of life. To the popular mind, religion came to mean little else than the ascetic practices of monastic life. Hence it was something with which the common people had little to do; and they would

naturally say, "We are not ascetics; we are ignorant people; and why should we be subjected to such rigorous demands?"[1] Men then began to talk, as the Roman Catholic Church still talks, of "leaving the world, and entering into religion," that is, into a monastic life. Religion became the business of the monks, the clergy, and the Church. The common people had nothing to do with it, beyond observing the rites and ordinances of the Church. If a man was admonished to read the Scriptures, and lead a godly life, his reply would be, "I am not a clerk: I have a family to support." It was thus that this great and sudden development of the monastic life gave a new impulse to that downward tendency which had been its chief originating cause.

Another evidence and result of the degeneracy of the Church was the speedy growing-up of a bigoted, persecuting spirit. Constantine and his sons extended some degree of toleration and protection to the heathenism which they had forsaken; but after their death the bishops demanded, and the government conceded, the entire suppression of the old religion. The feeble Pagans were actuated by no martyr spirit, and offered no resistance to the fate decreed against them. The Pagan temples were everywhere destroyed; and, before the close of the fourth century, the open exercise of the rites of the old religion had wholly ceased. But two hundred years later it was found that those rites were still practised secretly,

[1] Neander, vol. i. p. 278.

even by men standing high in the State and in the Church. Roused to a relentless fury by this discovery, the clergy and the populace constrained the reluctant government to enter upon an exterminating persecution. Every person suspected of the taint of Paganism was dragged before the tribunals, thrown to the wild beasts, and afterwards burnt. Thus, about the year 580, were the last vestiges of the old religion trodden out in flames and blood.[1]

But, terrible as was this last spasmodic outbreak against the poor remains of a perished heathenism, the relentless fanaticism with which the various Christian sects sought to destroy each other was more terrible still. In the course of the fifth century, the doctrine was fully established that the civil government was bound to suppress all heresy, — all differing by so much as a hair's breadth from the precise statement of doctrine laid down by the authorities of the Church.

The history of religious persecution forms one of the most gloomy and repulsive chapters in all the records of the past. Nor in this matter has any one religious body of earlier times great reason to boast itself over others. An intolerant, persecuting spirit has been but the too universal characteristic of the human mind. The Pagans persecuted the early Christians; the Christians, in their turn, persecuted not only the Pagans, but their own dissenting sects. The Papal Church has persecuted Protestants; and

1 See an article in "The North British Review" for August, 1854, on "Syriac Church History, and John of Ephesus."

Protestants have persecuted not only Romanists, but each other. The German Reformers fully believed and earnestly taught that it was the duty of the civil magistrate to maintain and defend the purity of the faith, even with the power of the sword. The Church of England, during the first hundred and fifty years of its existence, vehemently persecuted both Catholics and dissenting Protestants. The Scotch Presbyterians enacted, in 1560, that whoever should say mass, or be present while it was said, should suffer confiscation of goods for the first offence, banishment for the second, and death for the third. Nor were the skirts of the English Puritans clear in this matter. Studying attentively these painful facts, we may learn from them a very important truth. The great principle of toleration and religious freedom, — the principle that the civil power has no right to interfere, in any degree whatsoever, in matters of religious opinion and belief, — which we justly consider the most precious element in our birthright as American citizens, has been wrought out by no human wisdom, but by a divine Providence alone. No considerable or influential body of Christians ever took its stand on this principle, or even saw its truth, until towards the close of the seventeenth century, when an overruling Hand placed together upon the soil of England two parties of Protestant Christians so nearly equal in strength, that neither was able to suppress the other. These two parties, unwillingly, and protesting against the principle, were thus constrained to tolerate

each other until, by an unexpected experience of its blessings, the truth of the principle was proved, and religious toleration was established.

While, therefore, we hold this priceless possession at its true value, it behooves us not to judge severely those before us, who could not see the truth as we see it, and whose narrow and intolerant spirit was the necessary result of the darkness of their times.

After the death of Constantine, the old experience of rival Emperors and desolating civil wars was renewed in the decrepit Empire; and to these evils, terrible enough in themselves, were soon added the greater horrors of destroying inroads from the wild regions of the North. These invasions by the German and Scythian tribes became with each succeeding generation more frequent, more extensive and irresistible, more desolating and ruinous in their results. It was not long before the decaying fabric fell asunder, and became finally divided into two Empires, the East and the West.

The brief and miserable history of the Western Empire may be traced in few words. One after another, the waves of barbarian invasion swept over its devoted territory, until, one hundred and forty years after the death of Constantine, or about the year 475, that Empire ceased to exist, and the darkness of universal barbarism settled down over Western Europe.

All that was now left of the power and civilization of Rome was comprised within the limits of the

Eastern Empire ; known in history as the Greek Empire, because its language and literature were Greek, while it embraced within its limits the territory and colonies of ancient Greece. This Empire languished on for a thousand years, in a "tottering, drivelling, paralytic longevity," with no religious life, no healthful and progressive intellectual activity, no promise of a better day to come ; awaiting the slow approach of inevitable doom.[1]

And so we come to the year 600, one of the great turning-points in the history of mankind. Mohammed has now been born, has arrived at man's estate, and, away upon the far south-eastern frontiers of the Empire, is watching the course of events, and slowly evolving those great designs which are to affect so mightily the destinies of the world.

At this time the Greek Empire comprised almost the same territories, which, within the memory of persons still living, belonged to its great successor, the Empire of the Ottoman Turks. These were the regions now occupied by Greece and Turkey in Europe, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, and the North of Africa, with Sicily and Southern Italy, — regions then, all of them, populous and wealthy,[2] the fairest portion of the civilized world. It was a dominion splendid enough and ample enough, one would think, to satisfy the largest ambi-

[1] See a vigorous description of the state of things in the Greek Empire, in Macaulay's article on History, in his Miscellaneous Essays.

[2] Excepting the old dominions of Carthage in the North of Africa, which were already in the hands of the Vandals.

tion of the human mind. The victim of constant wars, and of a corrupt, rapacious, and imbecile government, the Empire was sinking steadily into hopeless decay. But great cities and splendid churches abounded throughout its provinces; and a population in some degree industrious and prosperous, though degenerate and spiritless, still harvested the abundant crops of its fruitful and skilfully cultivated soil.

From the Church, the last signs of spiritual life were fading away. The furious controversies of the two preceding centuries had divided it into various sects, some of them large and powerful, others small and weak, but all of them hating, excommunicating, fighting against, and to the utmost of their ability destroying, each other. No Pagan zealot ever poured out such torrents of human blood in the name of his dark and sanguinary gods as did those ecclesiastical persecutors in the name of the Prince of peace.[1] "Give me, O Cæsar!" said Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, to the Emperor Theodosius in a public discourse, "Give me, O Cæsar! the earth purged of heretics, and I will give you the kingdom of heaven. Exterminate with me the heretics, and with you I will exterminate the Persians."

These sects were becoming little else than the lifeless forms of a dead Christianity, fit only to be buried and forgotten. And in the strange providence of God they were buried; and there, perfect in their tomb, they still remain. Just as we find the trees

[1] See Neander, vol. ii. p. 447, and Gibbon, vol. iv. pp. 505, 528–531.

and plants of former ages buried in the earth, and preserved perfect in every fibre for the instruction of future centuries; so, as we penetrate the superincumbent body of Mohammedan society, do we find these ancient fossilized sects still existing, just as perfect and well defined as when the great eruption of the mighty Moslem volcano first swallowed them up. Our missionaries, in carrying once more to those regions a true Christianity, are preaching to orthodox Greeks, Nestorians, Monophysites,[1] and Monothelites,[2] the very sects which by their fierce dissensions rent the Greek Empire eleven centuries ago. Every sect is there, still riding its little hobby, still clinging pertinaciously to the subtle distinction which separates it from all others, still hating and excommunicating all who differ by a hair's breadth from its own dead belief.

We thus see, that, at the beginning of the seventh century, what remained of the old dominion of Rome had become a worn-out field, which needed to be wholly broken up and laid fallow by some mighty and desolating ploughshare. Better a living, energetic faith in even a false religion than this dead Christianity. Better a vigorous and earnest barbarism, than this effete civilization.

And so it was, that, as the Pagan Mohammed from the sands of Arabia cast his eyes thoughtfully over the still vast and magnificent dominions of the Empire, he surveyed a system of things which had waxed old, and was ready to vanish away.

[1] Jacobites. [2] Maronites.

CHAPTER II.

ANCIENT ARABIA AND THE ARAB RACE.

ARABIA, until quite recently, has always been regarded as a vast expanse of sandy deserts, inhabited almost entirely by wandering tribes. Recent explorations have for the first time made the interior of this immense peninsula known to the world, and have shown that this idea is quite incorrect. A great part of Arabia is occupied by a vast table-land, high and mountainous, but interspersed with beautiful and fruitful valleys, well watered by wells and running streams. This elevated interior has been occupied by a fixed population, has been carefully cultivated, and filled with towns and villages, from time immemorial. It is now estimated that two-thirds of Arabia is either cultivated, or capable of cultivation. The following passage from Palgrave's "Central Arabia" is an excellent description of the physical characteristics of the peninsula: —

"The general type of Arabia is that of a central table-land, surrounded by a desert ring, sandy to the south, west, and east, stony to the north. This outlying circle is in its turn girt by a line of mountains, low and sterile for the most, but attaining in

Yemen and Oman considerable height, breadth, and fertility; while, beyond these, a narrow rim of coast is bordered by the sea. The surface of the midmost table-land equals somewhat less than one-half of the entire peninsula; and its special demarcations are much affected, nay, often absolutely fixed, by the windings and inrunnings of the Nefoud (sandy desert). If to these central highlands, or *Nejed*, taking that word in its wider sense, we add whatever spots of fertility belong to the outer circles, we shall find that Arabia contains about two-thirds of cultivated, or at least of cultivable land, with a remaining third of irreclaimable desert, chiefly on the south."[1]

The Arabian people sprang originally from two distinct races, the earlier of which had occupied the southern part of the peninsula for centuries before the other appeared upon the stage. This primitive race, although its descent is traced in Arabic tradition from Joktan, or, as the Arabs call him, Kahtan, the son of Heber, Sir Henry Rawlinson regards as unquestionably Cushite or Hamitic, — the Ethiopians of the Old Testament; a race which not only occupied Southern Arabia, but spread itself eastward over India before that country was occupied by the Japhetic or Aryan tribes, westward into Abyssinia and Nubia, perhaps also into Egypt. The latest German investigations seem to favor the conclusion that in the earlier Arab race two elements were blended, — the one Hamitic, the other Semitic; the children of Cush, and the children of Joktan. It is also affirmed that the early Cushite language gave place gradually to a Semitic

[1] Central Arabia, vol. i. p. 91.

form of speech long before the fall of the old Cushite Kingdom.

The other race was named from Ishmael, the son of Abraham, and embraced not only his descendants, but the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites, Midianites, and probably other cognate tribes. The families of the older race are now known in Arabia as Yemenites, the Ishmaelitic Arabs as Māādites; and it is said, that although they have lived together for more than three thousand years, not only in their native Arabia, but wherever their victorious arms were carried by the successors of Mohammed, the Yemenites and Māādites have always been, and still remain, not only entirely distinct, but perpetually and fiercely hostile to each other. "The animosity of these two races to each other is unaccountable but invincible. Like two chemical products which instantly explode when placed in contact, so has it always been found impossible for Yemenite and Māādite to live quietly together. At the present day the Yemenite in the vicinity of Jerusalem detests the Māādite of Hebron, and, when questioned as to the reason of their eternal enmity, has no other reply but that it has been so from time immemorial. In the time of the Caliphs, the territory of Damascus was desolated by a murderous war for two years, because a Māādite had taken a lemon from the garden of a Yemenite. The province of Murcia in Spain was deluged with blood for seven years, because a Māādite inadvertently plucked a Yemenite vine-leaf. It was

a passion which surmounted every tie of affection or interest. 'You have prayed for your father: why do you not pray for your mother?' a Yemenite was asked in the Cāāba. 'For my mother!' said the Yemenite. 'How could I? She was of the race of Māād.'"[1]

In the business affairs of the ancient world, these two races together held a position of the very highest importance. The commerce of the East was almost wholly in their hands. In Southern Arabia the Cushite Arabs early founded a strong and opulent state, known in history as the Himyarite Kingdom, from its kings of the family of Himyar, which endured for two thousand years. Indeed, there seems little reason to doubt that Cushite Arabia was the seat of an advanced civilization, and a far-reaching commercial activity, long before the dawn of history.[2] Saba (probably the same with Sheba, whose queen paid a visit to her royal neighbor Solomon) was one of several important cities in this kingdom, whose riches and splendor are celebrated even by the great writers of Greece and Rome. The Himyarites were the navigators of the East; and by their vessels the great and lucrative traffic between the Indies and the West was carried on. Nor was their wealth derived alone from commerce. They seem to have been no less remarkable for their manufacturing skill and industry than

[1] Edinburgh Review, July, 1866, p. 2.

[2] This subject has been exhaustively discussed by Mr. John D. Baldwin, in his learned work entitled "Prehistoric Nations."

they were as navigators of the sea. The Himyarites had a written language, inscriptions in which still exist. It was Ethiopic in character, akin to the ancient Abyssinian.

The Ishmaelite or Māādite Arabs, on their part, carried on the enormous overland trade by means of caravans, in which the whole people found employment and wealth. It is difficult for us to conceive of the vast extent of this caravan commerce, which, however, did not reach its full development until the establishment of Roman power in the East. Two great caravan routes left the Himyarite cities, one skirting the Persian Gulf and the Euphrates to Chaldæa and Assyria, and thence by Tadmor, or Palmyra, to Damascus; the other following the coast of the Red Sea, or another route farther inland, to Petra, where it branched into two lines, one passing westward to Gaza, Phœnicia, and Egypt, the other going north to Damascus. The caravans which pursued these routes were like small armies in magnitude. They had their regular times of starting, of passing their several stages, and of intersecting other routes. Large towns grew up at their stations; while the great centres of the caravan trade, like Damascus, Palmyra, and Petra, rose to rank among the famous cities of the world.

It is an interesting fact to the Biblical student, that the early kings of Israel seem to have been intimately concerned in this overland commerce. Solomon built Palmyra, and fortified Petra; and his successors, as

late as Jehoshaphat, had a naval station at Ezion-geber (Akaba), at the head of the Red Sea.

After a time, however, the increased employment of shipping left the great caravan trade to fall into decay; and long before the time of Mohammed it had been reduced to comparatively narrow limits. This decline in their great business was very disastrous to the Arabs, and threw the whole nation into confusion. Old settlements were broken up, great cities were abandoned; and whole tribes, reduced from opulence to poverty, forsook their ancient seats, their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them, to provide for themselves as best they could. During this period of confusion, the Arabic nation, as it is known to modern history, seems to have been formed. The Yemenites, or Himyarites, had lost their ancient language, how long before does not appear; and the two races, although still retaining their traditional jealousy and hostility, had become everywhere, and to a foreign eye indistinguishably, fused into one people.

The nation thus formed was distinctively and thoroughly Semitic in character and language, and in both physical and mental characteristics was entitled to a high rank among the families of mankind. It has remained essentially unchanged to the present day. Of the Arabs as they now are, and as they have been for fourteen hundred years, the celebrated Baron de Larrey, surgeon-general of the first Napoleon in his expedition to Egypt and Syria, gives the

following account: "They have a physiognomy and character which are quite peculiar, and which distinguish them generally from all those which appear in other regions of the globe." In his dissections he found "their physical structure in all respects more perfect than that of Europeans; their organs of sense exquisitely acute, their size above the average of men in general, their figure robust and elegant, the color brown; their intelligence proportionate to their physical perfection, and without doubt superior, other things being equal, to that of other nations." [1]

Regarding the Arabs only as the rude, wandering, poverty-stricken sons of the desert, which they were in great part at the birth of Mohammed, we have been accustomed to look with wonder upon the sudden and splendid civilization which sprang up, and endured for a long period of time in the several Saracenic Empires, as something strange and unaccountable; but the facts now before us make it plain, not only that as a people they had always been capable of a high degree of civilization, but that in both the conjoined races they had, ages before, actually attained to it. Long before the time of Mohammed, the Arabs had stood among the most refined and cultivated nations of their times. The Himyarites of the south had their written language and their magnificent cities before the dawn of history. The Nabatheans of the north, the children of Nebajoth, Ishmaelites pure and simple, have left their capital

[1] Quoted in Kitto's Cyclopædia, article Arabia.

city Petra to be the wonder of every age to the end of time. Even the Arabs of the desert in the time of Mohammed were, in their barbaric way, a people of no little refinement and culture. Their language, it is true, had but just been reduced to writing, and few among them could read; Mohammed himself could not read; but it had been for ages the vehicle, to an eminently poetical race, of a vast body of unwritten poetry, and had thus been raised to a high degree of perfection. Oriental scholars speak with enthusiasm of the Arabic language, as being harmonious and affluent, almost perfect in grammatical structure, and capable of expressing every refinement of thought and feeling. For the poetical beauties of this splendid language every intelligent Arab had an exquisitely sensitive ear; and nothing was more delightful to him than to listen to the chanting or recital of the countless lays and ballads of his native land. A beautiful and highly finished poetical passage was irresistibly fascinating to his mind. Mohammed owed no small part of his success to his skill and power as a poet. Of this, which is spoken of by Arabic scholars as the most remarkable feature of the Koran, an English version of course gives no idea; but, in the following rendering of a passage from one of Mohammed's earliest revelations, an attempt has been made to convey to English ears some idea of the rhymed prose which makes that book so inimitable in the estimation of an Arab: —

"I swear by the splendor of light,
And by the silence of night,
That the Lord shall never forsake thee, nor in his hatred take thee:
Truly for thee shall be winning, better than all beginning.
Soon shall the Lord console thee, grief no longer control thee, and fear no longer cajole thee.
Thou wert an orphan boy: yet the Lord found room for thy head.
When thy feet went astray, were they not to the right path led?
Did he not find thee poor, yet riches around thee spread?
Then on the orphan boy let thy proud foot never tread;
And never turn away the beggar who asks for bread,
But of the Lord's bounty ever let praise be sung and said." [1]

Politically, however, the Arabs seem to have made no advancement whatever. The structure of society among them was the very simplest that could exist. The several families, clans, and tribes feebly adhered together, in almost perfect individual freedom, under their sheikhs,[2] or chiefs, who were simply leaders with almost no executive power. Even the kings were little else than the heads of great families, sheikhs of sheikhs.[3] These several tribes would acknowledge no superior, and no law save the customs of their race. From the beginning they have been a wild

[1] Edinburgh Review, July, 1866, article Mahomet.

[2] Dr. Van Dyck, than whom there is no higher authority, pronounces this word *shikes*.

[3] "The sheikh has no actual authority over the individuals of his tribe: he may, however, by his personal qualities obtain considerable influence. His commands would be treated with contempt; but deference is paid to his advice, if the people regard him as a man skilled in public and private affairs."—*Burckhardt's Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys*, vol. i. p. 116.

race, unconquerable, intractable, infusible, always wrangling in interminable feuds, always robbing or plundering with every opportunity, yet displaying many noble and redeeming qualities. Outside of his tribe, the true Arab had little conception of any moral duty or relation whatever, except as the result of a voluntary compact. But within that narrow circle his conduct was often governed by a high and delicate moral sense. He was true and faithful, loving tenderly his wife and children, hospitable to the last degree, literally holding all that he had at the service of his guests and clansmen, temperate and chaste, and stained with few of those degrading vices which in later times have too often disgraced the Turk. Burckhardt remarks that the Arabs are the only true lovers in the East. Marriage among them, in ancient as in modern times, was in most cases the result of a mutual attachment. But the perfect freedom of divorce, which has always prevailed, was a sad destroyer of domestic happiness. To free himself from a wife, though he had been married but two days, the Arab husband had only to say, "*Ent talek*," "Thou art divorced," and the separation was complete. Licentiousness, and infidelity to the marriage vow, have always been almost unknown among the true Arabs of the desert; and they have been usually marked by strong affection for parents, especially for the mother.

The Arabs of the sixth century, like those of the present day, were divided into two classes, — the dwellers in towns and cities, and the wandering tribes

of the desert. The latter were very rude and poor, the former comparatively wealthy and refined. Of the reduced but still considerable caravan trade of those days, Mecca was the most important centre in Western Arabia, and had come to be regarded as the sacred city of the race. The large and wealthy caravans of Mecca visited annually first the seaport towns upon the southern coast, and then the great and splendid marts of Syria and Egypt. With these caravans Mohammed was accustomed from early youth to visit Damascus and the other great cities of Syria, so that he had every opportunity to become acquainted with the state of things in the decaying Empire of Constantinople.

Up to this period, the Arabs had been from time immemorial a Pagan people. With some vague notion of one supreme God, their worship was chiefly paid to a multitude of subordinate deities, called *Djinn*, or genii, of which each tribe and family had its own; and the images of which, to the number of three hundred and sixty, one for each day of the lunar year, were collected in the temple at Mecca, which was the chief seat of their worship. That worship, although not so grossly superstitious as that of some other of the Pagan nations of antiquity, was of a very cruel and sanguinary character. Human sacrifices were not infrequent; and the offering of the worshipper was sometimes his own child. The destruction of infant daughters under the guise of religious rites was especially frequent. The great object of worship

at Mecca was a plain black stone, to which pilgrimages were made every year from all parts of Arabia. This stone was so sacred in the eyes of his people, that Mohammed could not cast it away; and it still remains the central object of the sacred precincts at Mecca.[1]

Earlier, Mecca had belonged to a Yemenite tribe; but four generations before the birth of Mohammed the Māādite tribe of Koreish had obtained possession of the holy city, and, with the city, of the high priestly office, the highest dignity, both religious and political, in the Arabian nation. This high office was in the family of Hashem, the leading branch of the tribe of Koreish, and was filled with princely magnificence and authority by Hashem, and after him by his son Abu Mutalib, the grandfather of Mohammed.

[1] This black stone was the Beit-allah, the Beth-el, or house of God; that is, the place of worship, or sacred altar, to the early Arab tribes. Upon the general reverence for such sacred stones in primitive times, see Dean Stanley's "History of the Jewish Church," Lecture III.

CHAPTER III.

MOHAMMED.

WE now enter upon one of the most singular, as well as most interesting and instructive chapters in the history of mankind. It is the story of a false religion, springing up among a rude and illiterate people in a dark and barbarous corner of the earth, yet rising to the possession of a mightier power, and impressing itself more deeply upon the destinies of the human race, than any other religion which the world has ever seen excepting Christianity alone.[1]

Among the few great men whose individual genius has powerfully affected the whole subsequent course of human events, Mohammed must be placed in the foremost rank. It has probably never been given to any other uninspired man to affect so mightily and so

[1] The authorities on which I have chiefly relied in preparing this chapter are, Sale's Koran and Introductory Discourse; Gibbon's Decline and Fall; and what I have been able to gather at second-hand, through the reviews, of the great works of Sprenger and M. Caussin de Percival. To this I should add much and most valuable information kindly communicated to me orally, by Dr. Van Dyck of the Syrian mission. See also Milman's Latin Christianity, Book IV. chaps. i. and ii., and Stanley's History of the Eastern Church, Lecture VIII.

permanently the destinies of his fellow-men. Yet it is also true that the great results which sprang from the preaching of Mohammed were owing far more to the circumstances of the times, than to his genius and sagacity. Under favorable circumstances, a child might kindle a conflagration which should sweep over a continent. And so, although in another age and under other circumstances Mohammed might have lived and died unknown, in that peculiar condition of things in which a divine Providence cast his lot, even such a spark as the preaching of an obscure enthusiast in the wilds of Arabia was enough to kindle a conflagration which in the short space of half a century swept over more than half of the most civilized portion of the earth. Mohammedanism has played a great part in human affairs for twelve hundred years. We must therefore arrive at a clear apprehension and a just estimate of the character both of Mohammed personally, and of the religious and political system which he founded, or we cannot understand either the providential plan which has governed the entire course of events in the past, or the present state of things upon the world-wide stage of human action. But to acquire such a knowledge, to form such an estimate of Mohammed and his system, is no easy task. It is not easy for us to preserve our self-respect, and yet to judge fairly a system which for twelve hundred years has been the most powerful and most bitter enemy of our religion and our civilization, and which has always looked contemptuously upon

every Christian as an infidel and a dog. And, again, for the human mind to so abstract itself from its surroundings in the present, as to be able to understand correctly and judge fairly the character and conduct of men who lived in an age and land having almost nothing in common with our own, is one of the most difficult of tasks. Such men ought to be judged not by the standards of our more perfect civilization, but according to the light enjoyed and the principles established in their own age and land. Mohammed was an illiterate, barbarous Pagan, living in an age when all true religion seemed about to perish from the earth, and when the light of civilization itself was becoming rapidly obscured. These things must be carefully taken into the account if we would understand either his personal character, or the system which he founded. We may, however, assume at the outset, that the rise of the Mohammedan power had its place in the divine plan, was permitted for a wise purpose; and that its results to the human race have been for good and not for evil, for the advancement and not the hindering of the kingdom of God.

Mohammed was born at Mecca, probably in A.D. 569. His grandfather was Abu Mutalib, High Priest and Prince of Yemen, a Maadite or Ishmaelitic Arab, of the family of Hashem, and the tribe of Koreish. Abu Mutalib was an honorable and magnificent chief, who had freed Yemen from servitude to the Christian princes of Abyssinia, and relieved the distress of the people of Mecca in time of famine, by the wealth

which he derived from commerce. His best beloved son, described in Arabic tradition as the most beautiful of the Arabian youth, was Abdallah, the father of Mohammed. Abdallah died before the birth of his son, and his wife Amina, a woman of Jewish birth, six years later. Mohammed was thus left an orphan, and with very slender resources ; but after his father's death his grandfather, and afterwards his uncle Abu Taleb, cared with generous kindness for the lonely child. We thus see that this orphan boy who was destined to overthrow the faith of his fathers, to become the apostle of a new religion, and through that religion to found one of the mightiest Empires of history, was born at the very summit of Arabian respectability and influence. Still the youth of Mohammed was passed in great poverty ; and at the age of twenty he was keeping sheep for a farthing a day. But, arrived at man's estate, his handsome person, engaging manners, and business tact and ability, made him very soon a popular and prosperous man. Khadijah, a wealthy widow of the tribe of Koreish, made him master of her caravan ; and, though fifteen years his senior, soon gave him her hand in marriage. This marriage proved eminently happy, being marked by the strongest mutual confidence and affection, until the union was broken by the death of Khadijah. Seven children were the fruit of this marriage, — three sons, who all died young ; and four daughters, the youngest of whom was Fatima, afterwards the wife of Ali.

Mohammed had now reached the meridian of life; his marriage had given him wealth and leisure, and in his numerous journeys with the caravans he had seen much of the world. Now it was that he began to display his remarkable qualities of mind, and to form his peculiar religious views. As we have seen, he was brought up in the princely and high-priestly family of his grandfather and uncle, who had charge in succession of the temple at Mecca, and its religious rites. He was thus not only trained from childhood in all the doctrines and mysteries of the Paganism of his native land, but placed in circumstances which would naturally give him a strong interest in its preservation. But those circumstances were also such as to give him a wide acquaintance with other and better religious systems. He could neither write nor read. Indeed, as already stated, the Arabic character had but just been invented, and his native language had as yet hardly begun to possess a written literature. But the wilds of Arabia had become the common asylum of every persecuted opinion. In that desolate but free abode the Magians of Persia, the Jews, and the Nestorian and Jacobite Christians had all taken root, and grown into numerous and flourishing communities, whose doctrines and practice were familiarly known from one end of Arabia to the other. And, however much these systems differed in other respects, they all agreed in the vital doctrine of one supreme and only God, — a doctrine which seems early to have taken a strong hold upon the

thoughtful mind of Mohammed. And not upon his mind alone: recent investigations have brought to light the fact that before this time a deep and strong movement had commenced among the more enlightened Arabs, in the direction of a purer and more rational faith. There had long been a sect in Arabia, holding a position half way between the Jews and the Sabeans, and partly descended, it may be, from a Jewish ancestry, known as Hanyfs.[1] This sect held firmly to the monotheism of the Jews, and had in their possession a set of books or writings called the Rolls of Abraham, which evidently set forth, with greater or less correctness, the doctrines of the Old Testament relating to the being and government of God. During the early manhood of Mohammed, several of these Hanyfs, who seem to have been very sincere and earnest men, were well known at Mecca, where they zealously preached the doctrine of one holy and eternal God, and denounced unsparingly both the principles and the practices of heathenism. With some of these Arabic "reformers before the Reformation," Mohammed became intimately associated. Indeed, he calls himself a Hanyf in the Koran; and it is supposed that some of the rhymed utterances of one at least of these men are found in that book.[2] It is known also that he had at dif-

[1] From a Hebrew word signifying a freethinker.

[2] The Hanyf here referred to was Zeid, of whom the reviewer already cited speaks as follows: "From what we have stated of Zeid, and the poetry he has left behind him, it may be concluded that he possessed the evangelical nature in a far higher degree than Mahomet. A romantic and almost saintly

ferent times considerable personal intercourse with Nestorian Christians. When he was but twelve years old, on his first journey to Syria with the caravans of his native city, at Bostra, on the borders of the desert, he and his uncle were hospitably entertained at a Nestorian monastery. The monks of this establishment seem to have fully appreciated their opportunity in having under their influence a precocious and serious-minded boy belonging to the high-priestly family of the Arabian nation, and to have improved it to instruct him as fully as possible in the doctrines of their Church. It is said also, that a Nestorian monk of Bostra, Boheira or Bahyra by name, accompanied Mohammed to Mecca at a later date, and was more or less intimately associated with him about the time of his first imaginary revelations. From this monk he seems to have derived much of his imperfect knowledge of the Bible. Of still greater importance to him was the residence in his family of a cousin of his wife, named Waraka, a man of considerable learning, part Hanyf, part Jew, and part Christian, who was not only able to read the Jewish Scriptures, but had translated some portions of them into Arabic.

Mohammed had been formed by nature for a religious visionary or enthusiast. His nervous system was sensitive and excitable to the last degree. As he advanced in years he grew melancholy and

interest attaches to his premature death in the search after a purer faith." — *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1866, p. 11.

abstracted, fond of solitude and lonely musings. He also became subject to fits of hysteria or epilepsy, which often left him unconscious, and induced just that physical condition in which men see visions and dream dreams, fully believing that their hallucinations are actual realities. By his thirty-fifth year, the great idea that there is but one living and true God, seems to have taken full possession of his mind. About this time, with the leisure which followed his marriage, he began to indulge in long-continued retirement and religious meditation. In this way he spent days and weeks together in a cave not far from Mecca. These ascetic habits acted powerfully upon his sensitive nervous system. Awake and asleep, his thoughts were ever intensely occupied with the one great inquiry, What is religious truth? He began to have visions and trances; and, in one of these, he seemed to see a supernatural being, whether *djinn* or angel he could not tell, who said to him, —

> "Recite in the name of the Lord thy Creator;
> He hath made man out of clots of blood.
> Speak out, for thy Lord is the mightiest
> Of all who have instructed through the pen.
> He taught man what he did not know."

But this vision brought him no peace. Long after this, he remained greatly depressed and dejected, sometimes wandering like a madman over the burning, dismal hills of the neighborhood, sometimes tempted to end a miserable existence by throwing himself from a precipice.

By his fortieth year, the great ideas of his religious system were already fully developed in his mind. He was convinced that the Paganism in which he had been brought up was a false religion, and that there is but one true God, just, holy, infinite, and eternal, even the God revealed to mankind, according to the Jewish and New Testament Scriptures, through Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, the prophets, and Jesus Christ. But when he sought for the religion of this true and only God, — a religion satisfying the needs and desires of the human mind, and both deserving and commanding the faith and obedience of the world, — he seemed to seek in vain. Judaism, to say nothing of its corruptions, was a narrow, inexpansive, family religion, wholly unsuited to the wants of the world. With Christianity, as it appeared to his mind, the case was even worse. He could not read the Scriptures for himself; nor, excepting the small portions of them translated by his friend Waraka, could he hear them read in Arabic, the only language which he understood. It was thus impossible for him to obtain any full or correct knowledge of the teachings of the New Testament. What he knew of Christianity was derived mainly from what he had seen of its character and workings, and from inaccurate reports of its doctrines. Bearing these facts in mind, we cannot deem it strange that the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, conflicting as it necessarily must in his mind with the sublime idea of the unity of God which had taken so strong a hold upon his belief, should have

seemed to him a fatal corruption of the teachings of the last and greatest of the prophets. He believed him to be the Word of God,[1] born without a human father, by the direct exercise of almighty power; but to say that he was divine, and one with the Father, seemed to him a blasphemous derogation from the glory of the one and only God. But this was not all. The Christianity of his times seemed to him, and that truly, to have degenerated into a Paganism worse than that of his own people; into a base and heathenish worship of saints, pictures, crosses, and human bones. Everywhere the simple truth of divine revelation had been perverted, its true light obscured. The darkened world was perishing in its ignorance; and there was none to enlighten it, and guide it aright. It is no wonder that it should have seemed to him that the time had come for another prophet to arise to re-assert the corrupted and forgotten truth, and to preach again the great doctrine of the unity of God. Nor need we deem it strange, that, in the visions and trances into which his over-excited nature was frequently thrown by his constant and exhausting meditations upon these great subjects, he should seem to hear a divine call summoning him to that high office. This supposed call appears to have come to him in a trance, or vision, which at length freed him from his mental distress, and satisfied both himself and his wife that he was anointed to be a prophet of the Most High. Khadijah received the intelligence of

[1] See chap. iii. of the Koran, Sale's translation, p. 41.

this vision with a simple and joyful faith, and at once became his first disciple.

He began immediately to preach his new religion, at first privately among his friends, afterwards publicly in the temple. But for a long time his progress was slow, and his success small. For thirteen years he prosecuted his work in the face of loss and suffering, of opposition and persecution, often at the peril of his life. There is no reason to believe that he was actuated during this period by a merely interested or mercenary zeal. He seems to have aspired to no higher position than that of a preacher and teacher, and to have had no anticipation whatever of the great results which circumstances, far more than his own policy or designs, were to cause to spring from his preaching. In a Christian, we should say that a course like that of Mohammed during these thirteen years could be inspired only by an honest and fervent faith ; and we must say the same of him.

Mohammed evidently borrowed his theology and ethics mainly from the Bible. The Koran is made up in great part of Jewish and Christian doctrines and traditions, in the loose form in which its author had learned them by oral communication. With all its puerilities and false teachings upon minor matters, every fair-minded student of its pages must admit, with Sale,[1] that it teaches with a considerable degree of truthfulness the great doctrine of one spiritual and eternal God ; that the God of the Koran is

[1] Preliminary Discourse, p. 51

essentially the God of Moses, — "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

How far the Koran is a piece of fraud and imposture, is a question very difficult to answer. It seems very clear, that, in the essential spirit of his preaching, Mohammed was from first to last thoroughly honest. To the very close of his life he was manifestly inspired by the profoundest faith in his doctrine and his mission. That there is but one God, and that he had been called to preach that great truth to his countrymen, he believed; and how far, in his sleeping or waking visions, he may have received what he believed to be revelations of some parts of the Koran, we cannot tell. But, to an illiterate Oriental, the boundary-line between truth and fiction is very indistinct. To such minds the creations of the imagination often become more real than reality itself. The ancient Greeks believed the fables of Homer more religiously than they did the well-authenticated facts of their history, — a belief in which the author of those immortal poems himself probably shared in no small degree. If Mohammed had once become persuaded that divine revelations had been made to him, he would find it impossible to draw the line, and say where inspiration ended, and imagination began. We may observe also, that, heathen as he was, he would be very likely to feel justified in the use of means somewhat dishonest, for the accomplishment of a

good and important end. As time wore on, and he found himself rising into such authority as he had never anticipated in his wildest dreams, the temptation to abuse the prophetic powers which he claimed became stronger and more constant, until ere long he allowed himself to meet every perplexing emergency of his anomalous position by a pretended revelation.

As a man, we must concede to Mohammed a high rank. Excepting the Oriental infirmity of allowing to himself many wives (after the death of Khadijah), and a tinge of sanguinary cruelty characteristic of his race, he was, for his age and country, a man of eminent virtue; habitually and profoundly reverencing the name of God, simple, frugal, and unostentatious in all his tastes and habits, and always strenuously inculcating upon the rude barbarians about him almost every virtue which adorns a truly noble character.

The great offence laid to his charge is, that with increasing power he forsook the gentler doctrines of his earlier ministry, and propagated his religion by the sword. It is enough to say, in answer to this charge, that in this matter Mohammed was not behind his age, but far in advance of it. Upon this point, the Christian world at least has very little to say. Mohammed and his successors extended toleration and protection to their Christian subjects upon the comparatively easy terms of a definite tribute, such as for many centuries no Christian power would have accorded to Mohammedans; such, even, as the various

Christian sects would not accord to each other. In that age there was probably no man living, of any religion true or false, who did not believe that it was right to propagate his faith by the sword. By the degenerate Christian world, both East and West, the utter extermination of heretics and infidels was both preached and practised. Just before the birth of Mohammed, the Emperor Justinian, in a military persecution which was computed to have extirpated a hundred thousand of his subjects, blotted out of existence the poor remains of the Samaritan people, excepting a few wretched survivors who consented to receive the rite of baptism.[1] At a later day the Albigenses of the South of France, and the Moors of Spain, met a similar fate from the Church and the powers of the West. These terrible doctrines and practices were characteristic of the age ; and for them no church and no faith is to be held responsible.

After continuing at Mecca for thirteen years, preaching constantly and earnestly though with little success, and enduring incessant persecution from his heathen relatives and townsmen, Mohammed was at last obliged to fly for his life, and took refuge at Medina. This flight, or Hegira, took place in the year 622, and is reckoned the beginning of the Mohammedan era. He found the people of Medina well prepared for his coming. This city lies far to the north of Mecca, and was then occupied by a popu-

[1] Milman's History of the Jews, vol. iii. pp. 66–70 ; Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. iv. p. 530.

lation of a widely different character. It contained many Christians, and a far greater number of Jews. Indeed, from time immemorial, perhaps from the days of Solomon, Medina had been really a Jewish city, until, in the fourth century, two Yemenite tribes obtained possession of it by treachery, and became the dominant party. The Jews still remained, however, a flourishing and wealthy community ; and their Arab neighbors, living in constant and familiar intercourse with them, had become deeply imbued with their religious ideas. The Paganism of the city had thus become greatly weakened. Many pilgrims from Medina had heard Mohammed preach at Mecca, had embraced his cause, and had returned to propagate their new views at home. A strong party was thus formed in the city in Mohammed's interest, which by its deputies entered into a close alliance with him, and invited him to Medina. On his arrival, he was received with not only prophetic but kingly honors ; and from that day his position was secure. He now proclaimed the propagation of his faith by the sword, promising the wives, daughters, and plunder of their enemies to his victorious soldiers, and paradise to those who fell in battle. His faithful disciples of Medina formed the nucleus of his army ; and the wild tribes of the desert, always ready for any predatory warfare, flocked to his standard. After two sanguinary but doubtful battles, Mecca yielded to his authority ; and in the course of ten years the whole of Arabia had been won or subdued to his cause.

This was the limit of his personal achievements. In the year 632 he died, leaving the now united hosts of the Saracens,[1] as the Mohammedan Arabs were from this time called, gathered like a threatening cloud upon the borders of the civilized world, ready to enter upon their tremendous career of conquest.

[1] Derived from *Sara*, a desert.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SARACENS.

UNTIL three days before his death, Mohammed was able to lead in the public prayers. He then designated the venerable Abubeker, one of his earliest disciples and most steadfast friends, and the father of his wife Ayesha, to officiate in his place. This modest expression of his preference determined the choice of his successor; and Abubeker was elected the first Caliph [1] of the Saracens. For a short time after Mohammed's death, the fortunes of Islam trembled in the balance. The wild tribes which had flocked to his standard were inspired only by a lukewarm and mercenary faith. Rival leaders appeared, rebellions were started, and it seemed as if the stupendous fabric would melt away more speedily than it had been formed. But upon the inner circle of his more immediate disciples and friends, those who had followed him from Mecca, those who had received him at Medina, Mohammed had impressed himself with wonderful power. In them were the life and soul of the system.

[1] From the Arabic *Khalafa*, to succeed. The Caliph was the successor of the Prophet, and was revered as the divinely anointed head of the Mohammedan Church and State.

They were inspired by a perfect faith, a burning zeal, and the intrepidity of a fanatical and absolute devotion to which nothing was impossible. Their measures were as prudent as they were firm and determined. Ere long, dissensions were allayed, rebellions were suppressed, and the Moslem hosts were re-united in a more perfect unity and a firmer faith. All things were ready, and the mighty movement began. Persia was the first great conquest won by their arms. This ancient kingdom had sunk in a few short years from the summit of power and greatness to the lowest depth of weakness and humiliation. It fell before the Moslem arms almost as speedily and ingloriously as it had yielded to the prowess of Alexander a thousand years before. A few swift campaigns, and its government had been overthrown, its King slain, and the whole of the vast territory, stretching from the Caspian to the Indus, had become an integral and permanent portion of the Mohammedan world.

The Caliphs and their lieutenants now prepared themselves for a more arduous task, — the conquest of Syria, and a contest with the decayed but still mighty power of the ancient Empire of Rome. Syria at this time was a fair and beautiful land. Damascus and Antioch were among the richest and most magnificent cities of the world, while a multitude of minor cities and strong fortresses filled the country. The cities were strongly fortified, well supplied with arms and military engines, and garrisoned by the brave and well-disciplined barbarian soldiery with which the Emperors

had recruited their armies. The fruitful soil was skilfully cultivated ; and the people were enriched by the vast and lucrative traffic between the East and the West.

The struggle was long, obstinate, and bloody, and was decided at last only by the discipline, endurance, and fanatical valor of the Saracens, and the matchless generalship and intrepidity of their great leader Caled, "the Sword of God." For many months these fiery and restless sons of the desert sat down in invincible patience before the walls of cities and fortresses, awaiting the slow process of exhaustion and starvation. On many a terrible and doubtful field they met the great and well-appointed armies which the Emperor Heraclius raised and sent against them. With unhesitating obedience they maintained their discipline, and turned cheerfully away from what soldiers, until recent times, have always regarded as the rewards of victory. Their steadfastness and valor at last had their reward. Every city and fortress yielded to their arms. The whole country was subdued ; and Syria, from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, and from Cilicia to the borders of Arabia, was added to the Empire of the Caliphs.

If we were to select some one chapter from the Saracen annals, as an example and illustration of the essential spirit and character of this new and tremendous power which had so suddenly appeared upon the earth, perhaps we could find none better suited to our purpose than this of the conquest of Syria. While

their armies were making them the absolute masters of a vast and magnificent Empire, the Caliphs remained at Medina in the proud humility of the extremest poverty and simplicity. Every Friday, the Mohammedan sabbath, they ascended the pulpit, led the public prayers, and exhorted the faithful. In dress and equipage they did not surpass the meanest of their brethren. Content with the gratification of a higher ambition, they scorned the temptations of pleasure and of gain.

The wealth left by Abubeker at his death was a coarse garment and five pieces of gold. His successor, Omar, was found by a Persian satrap asleep among the beggars on the steps of the mosque. His food was barley-bread or dates, his drink water, his robe a tattered gown. The government of the early Caliphs was remarkably able and statesmanlike, and displayed much of the same uprightness and moderation which characterized their private lives. The instructions of Abubeker to the commanders of the Syrian expedition upon their first setting forth are thus quoted by Gibbon: "Remember that you are always in the presence of God, on the verge of death, in the assurance of judgment, and the hope of paradise. Avoid injustice and oppression; consult with your brethren, and study to preserve the love and confidence of your troops. When you fight the battles of the Lord, acquit yourselves like men, without turning your backs; but let not your victory be stained with the blood of women and children. Destroy no palm-trees.

nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you go on, you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God that way: let them alone, and neither kill them, nor destroy their monasteries. And you will find another sort of people (the priests), that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns: be sure you cleave their skulls, and give them no quarter till they either turn Mohammedans, or pay tribute." [1] These instructions were scrupulously followed. Moderate and honorable terms — terms fulfilled to the letter — were granted to those who surrendered or capitulated. The Christians retained most of their churches and a large share of their wealth, and lived under their new masters in comparative contentment and prosperity. As always happens under the leadership of great commanders, the Moslem chiefs soon impressed their own spirit and character thoroughly upon the hosts of their followers. The same undoubting faith, the same reverence for the name of God and contempt of death, the same burning zeal and fanatical valor, and the same unquestioning obedience and thoroughness of discipline, which had marked the immediate friends of the Prophet, soon characterized in a remarkable degree all the Saracen armies. In their camps the Koran was diligently studied, the

[1] Decline and Fall, vol. v. p. 189.

regular hours of prayer were observed. Sermons and exhortations were constantly heard. In a word, the controlling spirit of the stupendous movement was essentially and intensely religious; and this spirit impressed itself deeply and beneficially upon the great Empires of which it was the originating cause.

After the conquest of Syria, the Saracen leaders turned longing but despairing eyes upon Egypt. Egypt was at this time, as it had been for centuries, the granary of the Empire, and one of the richest and most populous regions of the globe. It was full of large and strongly fortified cities, and seemed securely defended by nature as well as by art. It seemed certain that the Greeks would make a desperate struggle for this the richest portion of their inheritance. If the enterprising and intrepid Amrou, whose great qualities as a leader had been already signalized in the conquest of Palestine, had not anticipated his master's orders or permission, the invasion of Egypt might not have been attempted. At the head of only four thousand men, Amrou marched from Gaza upon this herculean undertaking. Pelusium, the military key to Egypt, was soon taken; but the enterprise could have resulted only in failure, if Amrou had not found unexpected and most effectual support within the country itself. The Egyptian people, forming the still existing Coptic Church, adhered to the Monophysite heresy; and for this they had been persecuted and oppressed until they were filled with bitter hatred of the authorities at Constantinople, and ready to hail

the Saracens as deliverers. A treaty was soon made with Amrou upon fair and reasonable terms. The people flocked in fierce multitudes to his standard; and in an incredibly short space of time the Greeks were driven from every part of the country, except the great seaport city of Alexandria. The reduction of this city cost a long and arduous siege of fourteen months, and the loss of twenty-three thousand men; but it was at last accomplished, the whole country was won, and Egypt had been added, a fourth grand division, to the Empire of the Caliphs. Upon the fall of Alexandria, Amrou thus announced his success to his master: "I have taken the great city of the West. It is impossible for me to enumerate the variety of its riches and beauty: I shall content myself with observing that it contains four thousand palaces, four thousand baths, four hundred theatres, or places of amusement, twelve thousand shops for the sale of vegetable food, and forty thousand tributary Jews. The town has been subdued by force of arms, without treaty or capitulation; and the Moslems are impatient to seize the fruits of their victory."[1] But the Caliph firmly forbade the sack of the captured city. Its wealth was reserved for the public service; the people were numbered, a tribute imposed, the fury of the natives was restrained, and Egyptians and Greeks alike were protected in the exercise of their worship.

Nothing in the history of this strange people is more remarkable than the aptitude for administration

[1] Decline and Fall, vol. v. p. 227.

and good government displayed by these rude sons of the desert, in re-organizing their conquests. No sooner had Egypt been won, than Amrou proceeded with great firmness and wisdom to regulate its affairs. The usual and humiliating capitation tax (i.e., so much on the head of each Christian) was commuted for a fair percentage of every kind of income. A third of the revenue was set apart for the repair of the dikes and canals. Moslems and Christians were constrained to live together in amity and good neighborhood; the industry of the country was established upon a basis of permanence and prosperity; and Egypt became the granary of Arabia, as it had been of Rome and Constantinople. The Caliph Omar desired his lieutenant to send him a picture of the country he had subdued. Amrou was a poet, as well as a soldier; and his answer was as follows: "O Commander of the Faithful, Egypt is a compound of black earth and green plants, between a pulverized mountain and a red sand. The distance from Syene to the sea is a month's journey for a horseman. Along the valley descends a river, on which the blessing of the Most High reposes both in the evening and morning, and which rises and falls with the revolutions of the sun and moon. When the annual dispensation of Providence unlocks the springs and fountains that nourish the earth, the Nile rolls his swelling and sounding waters through the realm of Egypt; the fields are overspread by the salutary flood; and the villages communicate with

each other in their painted barks. The retreat of the inundation deposits a fertilizing mud for the reception of the various seeds. The crowds of husbandmen who blacken the land may be compared to a swarm of industrious ants; and their native indolence is quickened by the lash of the taskmaster, and the promise of the flowers and fruits of a plentiful increase. Their hope is seldom deceived; but the riches which they extract from the wheat, the barley, and the rice, the legumes, the fruit-trees, and the cattle, are unequally shared between those who labor, and those who possess. According to the vicissitudes of the seasons, the country is adorned with a silver wave, a verdant emerald, and the deep yellow of a golden harvest." [1]

From the conquest of Egypt, the Saracens turned to subdue the North of Africa, — the long and narrow region lying upon the southern shore of the Mediterranean, and stretching from Barca, the ancient Cyrene, to the Straits of Gibraltar. But this, the least important and valuable, proved the most difficult and costly of all their great conquests. The armies of the Empire, and the wild, half-Christianized tribes of the Moors or Berbers, held out long against the Moslem arms. The country was conquered and lost, reconquered and lost again. Two armies and two commanders perished in the long and weary struggle; and sixty years had passed away before the authority of the Caliphs was permanently and peacefully es-

[1] Decline and Fall, vol. v. p. 233.

tablished from the Red Sea to the Pillars of Hercules.

But this conquest led to another far more important and magnificent. The toils and losses of the African war were soon and abundantly compensated by the rapid and easy subjugation of Spain.

For more than three hundred years Spain had been a Gothic kingdom. The Goths of Spain, though descended from the terrible warriors of Alaric, had early become Christianized and civilized. But, dwelling securely behind the barrier of the Pyrenees, they were now enfeebled and enervated by many generations of quiet and prosperity. The Gothic king Witiza had recently died, or been deposed; and Roderic, one of the great nobles of the kingdom, had been elected to the vacant throne. But the two sons of Witiza refused to surrender their claims. A strong party was devoted to their interest; the country was filled with dissensions, and the new king found himself possessed of little power. The ruin of the kingdom was precipitated by the treachery of Count Julian, apparently a partisan of the sons of Witiza, who held the fortress of Ceuta, on the African shore of the Straits of Gibraltar. Under his guidance and protection, the armies of Musa, the Saracen commander, were quietly and safely landed on Spanish soil. The fate of the kingdom was decided in a great battle which lasted through four successive days, on the banks of the Guadalete. The rout of the Goths was complete; and the whole

kingdom hastened to make terms with the Moslem conqueror. In a few months almost every part of the peninsula had submitted, and Spain was added, the fifth and last of their great conquests, to the immense dominion of the Caliphs. A victory so soon and so easily won was followed by few excesses. Fair and moderate terms were granted to the towns and the nobles; the Christians were treated with great mildness and lenity. The Jews especially had reason to bless the day when the Saracens landed in Spain. They had been cruelly persecuted by the Gothic Christians, had welcomed the Saracens as deliverers, and had materially contributed to their success. Musa, in gratitude, extended to them full toleration and peculiar favor; and during the dark and miserable centuries which followed, while their brethren in the other parts of Europe were groaning under intolerable oppression, the Jews of Spain remained in the full enjoyment of a measure of peace and prosperity larger, probably, than had fallen to the lot of any portion of their race since the fall of Jerusalem.

So complete and universal was the conversion of the Persian people, that the conquering Saracens were lost in the multitude of native believers, and the country retained its own language. But throughout all the rest of the Saracen dominions the case was widely different. The Saracen armies were disseminated and settled in the lands which they subdued; the Arabic language, culture, and laws were everywhere

firmly established; the subject peoples largely adopted the language and manners of their conquerors; and from the Euphrates to the Mediteranean, from the Red Sea to the Pyrenees, the Caliphs reigned peacefully over an Arabic world. Thus one hundred years after the death of Mohammed did his successors stand the absolute masters of one of the largest, richest, most populous, and most highly civilized Empires that the world had ever seen. Of this great Empire Medina was no longer the capital. Abubeker was the first Caliph, Omar the second, Othman the third; and the fiery and intrepid Ali, the cousin of Mohammed, his first convert after his wife Khadijah, and the husband of his daughter Fatima, was the fourth. The brief and troubled reign of Ali was cut short by the blow of an assassin in the year 660. After the death of Ali, Moawiyah, of the family of Ommiyah,[1] and the tribe of Koreish, who had in his youth been named the secretary of Mohammed, and had afterwards, at his vice-royal seat of Damascus, held for forty years the government of Syria, secured the election, became the fifth Caliph, removed the seat of government from Medina to Damascus, and succeeded in making the Caliphate hereditary in his family.

For ninety years the Ommiades reigned in Damascus over the undivided Empire of the Mohammedan world. But in 750 the enfeebled dynasty was over-

[1] Whence the Caliphs of the line of Moawiyah are known as the Ommiades.

thrown; and Saffah, of the line of Abbas the uncle of Mohammed, became the first Caliph in the long succession of the Abbassides. Almansor, the brother and successor of Saffah, removed the seat of government a second time, and fixed it at the new city of Bagdad, on the banks of the Tigris. But the Moslem dominions were no longer undivided. Abdalrahman, a son of the last Caliph of the house of Moawiyah, fled to Spain, was received with joy by the people, and founded the kingdom of the Spanish Ommiades, with its capital at Cordova, which endured for two hundred and fifty years. About the same time Egypt and the North of Africa were separated from the Empire, and became the dominions of a succession of Caliphs who claimed descent from Ali and Fatima, and are hence known as the Fatimite Caliphs.

The three hundred years following the accession of Moawiyah were the golden age of Mohammedism. The conquering impulse had spent itself in the Saracens; and they subsided into the quiet cultivation of the arts of peace. In these gentler pursuits they displayed the great qualities of their race even more conspicuously than they had already shown them in the field. For many generations the Mohammedan dominions were marked not only by an increasing populousness, wealth, and general prosperity as great as any Oriental state has ever enjoyed, but by a social culture, and an intellectual activity, as vigorous and fruitful as they were universal. Perhaps the East has never seen a more brilliant and splendid reign

than that of the renowned Haroun al Raschid (the Just), who ascended the throne of Bagdad in 781, — a mighty and most successful prince, who, as he surveyed his vast dominions, everywhere populous and quiet, everywhere bright with advancing prosperity and civilization, might well believe that he and his Empire were the special objects of the favor of heaven. In the ninth and tenth centuries, the darkest period of the dark ages in Christian Europe, these Mohammedan kingdoms were the light of the world. Schools and universities were founded in most of the leading cities, and large and numerous public libraries were collected. More than seventy such libraries are said to have been formed in the cities of Spain; that of Cordova, the capital, containing six hundred thousand volumes. Treatises on astronomy, geometry, and chemistry were translated from the Greek, and everywhere taught; moral and metaphysical philosophy was diligently cultivated; and the science of medicine in particular was pursued with pre-eminent zeal and success.[1]

"In imparting these stores of knowledge to Western Europe," says Sir James Stephen, "the Arabs proved themselves more zealous and more successful than the Greeks. The moral and the physical sciences were in that age far better cultivated and understood on the banks of the Nile than on the shores of the Hellespont; and, amid the disasters of his Egyptian crusade, St. Louis had the leisure to examine, as

[1] Milman's Latin Christianity, vol. ii. p. 171; vol. viii. p. 243.

he had the candor to admire, the noble collections of books formed by the care of the later emirs. The library of La Sainte Chapelle at Paris, though the germ of the Bibliothèque du Roi, was originally nothing more than an imitation by that great man of the treasury of learning which the Caliph Almamon Abdallah and his successors had extorted from the fears of the Byzantine court."[1] From the barbarism and ignorance, the anarchy, violence, and oppression, the poverty and squalid misery, which pervaded all the North of Europe during these dark and evil centuries, it is pleasant to turn to the quiet and good order, the growing populousness, the smiling plenty and abounding wealth, and the vigor of social and intellectual life, which through the whole of the same period prevailed in the Mohammedan Kingdom of Spain. "The most powerful of the Ommiades who reigned in Spain derived from the kingdom the annual tribute of twelve millions and forty-five thousand dinars, or pieces of gold, — about six millions of sterling money, — a sum which in the tenth century most probably surpassed the united revenues of the Christian monarchs. His royal seat of Cordova contained six hundred mosques, nine hundred baths, and two hundred thousand houses. He gave laws to eighty cities of the first, to three hundred of the second and third order; and the fertile banks of the Guadalquivir were adorned with twelve thousand villages and hamlets. The Arabs

[1] Lectures on the History of France, p. 154.

might exaggerate the truth; but they created, and they describe, the most prosperous era of the riches, the cultivation, and the populousness of Spain." [1]

But this vigor and prosperity at length passed away. These kingdoms embraced within themselves the fatal principles of all Oriental despotisms, — principles which in time must inevitably develop in the sovereigns the vices of tyrants, in the people the vices of slaves. The several lines of Caliphs in their long succession degenerated into the feeble tools of favorites; as the government grew weak, the people grew corrupt, or, rather, became the prey of corrupt men; the bonds of society began to dissolve; and these kingdoms, like all that had gone before them, sunk in their turn into hopeless decay. In the Syrian Empire, by the year 1050, this process of decay was complete; the Caliphs of Bagdad had sunk into the most miserable and helpless imbecility. And now, as a wild barbarian soldiery in their enfeebled armies, there appears upon the stage of history another people, whose name was destined for many generations to be a new terror to the world, — THE TURKS.

[1] Gibbon, vol. v. p. 262.

CHAPTER V.

THE TURKS. — MAHMOUD THE GAZNEVIDE, AND THE HOUSE OF SELJÛK.

THE Turkish name belonged originally not to a distinct and well-defined barbarian tribe, like the Goths, or the Franks of ancient Germany, but to a widely extended Tartar race, which, during the first thousand years of the Christian era, "wandered, warred, and reigned" in the vast plains, or steppes, which lie to the north of Independent Tartary and the great mountain ranges of Central Asia. The establishment of the modern Empire of the Turks was the result of a great national migration which desolated and resettled immense territories in South-western Asia, very much as the German barbarians overran and re-occupied the western portions of the Roman Empire.

The Turks first became known and dreaded by the civilized world, as mercenary soldiers in the armies of the later Caliphs of Bagdad. These princes, as the vigor of their Empire passed away, sought to strengthen their decaying military power by filling their ranks with the wild shepherd warriors of the

North. This they readily effected by captives and voluntary enlistments, until ere long fifty thousand Turkish soldiers were permitted to become conscious of their dangerous strength, in the neighborhood of Bagdad. They were not long in finding out the weakness of the government; and, asserting their irresistible energy, they passed from servants to the most terrible of masters. This change took place about the year 870, upon the death of the Caliph Motassem.[1] After his decease, the Turkish guards, with true barbarian fickleness, elevated and destroyed three Commanders of the Faithful in the short space of four years. After a time, however, these turbulent mercenaries were so divided and scattered as to deprive them of their mischievous power; and the Caliphs of Bagdad continued their feeble reign until they were finally swept away in 1258, by the Monguls under the grandson of Ghengis Khan.

The first Turkish Empire in Southern Asia was established by Mahmoud, originally the servant of a petty prince of Gazna in Independent Tartary. Mahmoud first sustained the falling fortunes of his master, then supplanted him, and became himself the head of one of the mightiest Empires of mediæval times.[2]

Mahmoud the Gaznevide was the first who bore the royal title of Sultan; and as he was the first, so he was also one of the greatest and ablest, of the

[1] "With Motassem, the eighth of the Abbassides, the glory of his family and nation expired." — GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, vol. v. p. 321.

[2] The reign of Mahmoud the Gaznevide is reckoned from 997 to 1028.

long line of Turkish conquerors and sovereigns. His imperial seat was at Gazna. The regions east of the Caspian were at this time populous and wealthy, the seat of a great and lucrative overland traffic between the East and the West. These regions, with the northern part of Persia, and Afghanistan, formed his Empire, strictly speaking ; but, besides these countries, he subdued the greater part of India, from which he brought back incalculable spoil to his royal treasury at Gazna. The greatness and magnificence of Mahmoud, the peace and prosperity enjoyed by his Moslem subjects, his inexorable justice, and his magnanimity, are still celebrated in the East. It is of him that the story is told, so familiar to us all : —

A poor man appeared before him to complain that a soldier had driven him from his house and his bed. The Sultan directed the man to inform him of the soldier's next visit, promising to go with him, and in person avenge his wrongs. Three days afterwards he was called to the complainant's house to fulfil his promise. He went, and, first commanding the lights to be extinguished, gave sentence that the offender should be immediately put to death. Then calling for lights, and looking upon the dead man's face, he fell prostrate in thanksgiving, and demanded food. He had feared that the offender was his own son, and in the anguish of his anxiety had not tasted food for three days. He had commanded the lights to be removed before he saw the criminal's face, lest a father's affection might overcome the justice of the king.

Mahmoud the Gaznevide died in 1028, and with him expired the glory of his Empire. The reign of his son and successor, Massoud, was short and inglorious. He fell in the year 1038, in the great battle of Zendecan, which founded the greater and more enduring Empire of the house of Seljûk.

In the later years of Mahmoud, a great horde of Turcomans, the name by which the nomadic shepherd tribes of the Turkish race are still known, whose leader boasted that he could lead two hundred thousand horsemen to the field, had solicited service and a place in the Empire of the Sultan. Dissembling his anxiety, Mahmoud received these new and dangerous subjects, and sent them to wander over the elevated plains of Persia. These fierce warriors defied the authority of their benefactor's son, and in one dark day destroyed both his Empire and his life.

The victorious shepherds immediately proceeded to the election of a Sultan, — an election pregnant with great results. Their choice fell upon the renowned Togrul Beg, the grandson of Seljûk, from whom the new dynasty derived its name. Togrul fixed his seat at Nishabur ; and Persia became once more the seat of imperial dominion. From 1038 to 1092, during three reigns and a period of fifty-four years, the Sultans of the house of Seljûk ruled over an Empire the mightiest, as it was the most flourishing and prosperous, perhaps also the most civilized, of the world. Their Empire was bounded on the north by the Jaxartes and the Georgian Mountains, on the east by the Indus, on the west and

south by the limits of the Saracen Empire of Bagdad. Of all this vast Empire, Togrul and his two successors were emphatically the masters, though humbly accepting the title of the temporal lieutenants of the Commander of the Faithful. They were sincere and zealous Mohammedans; and, content with their own more modest title of Sultan, they revered the Caliph as their spiritual head, dutifully maintained his state and dignity, and suffered him to reign an imperial phantom at Bagdad. The eminent ability and terrible energy of these shepherd kings invested them with an authority which was irresistible and supreme. Their subjects submitted quietly to their rule; order and prosperity everywhere prevailed. Upon the establishment of their Empire, these wild shepherds of the North, as the Arabs had done before them, laid aside in some degree the primitive fierceness of their manners, and began to form the gentler habits of civilized life. Something of social refinement appeared among them; and, in the cities of Persia and Syria, the old culture and mental activity again revived.

In its order, prosperity, and civilization, as well as its extent, magnificence, and power, this Empire of the house of Seljûk made some approach to the more splendid dominion of the earlier Saracen Caliphs. This reign of the shepherd kings is indeed one of the surprises of history. As in the case of the Arabs, so in theirs, we are struck by the native aptitude which they display for a higher social order, a more regular

and civilized mode of life, than had prevailed upon their native plains. They appear before us a wandering horde of wild, barbarian shepherds; fierce, lawless, and bloodthirsty, restrained by no law, acknowledging no authority, and apparently without the least conception of social or political order. In wild, tumultuous fury they rise against their sovereign and benefactor, scatter his army, and deprive him of life. And then suddenly all is changed. Into the Empire thus left vacant they quietly step; extend its boundaries on every hand; reduce their numberless provinces not to humble submission alone, but to order and peace; extend over the whole of their vast dominion the authority of a government as mild and equitable as it is vigorous and energetic; kindle again the dying sparks of social refinement and intellectual life; and bestow upon the Eastern world an era of quiet prosperity and advancing civilization unknown for many generations before.

We may pause here to note somewhat particularly the distinguishing characteristics of the Turkish race. The old, undegenerate Turkish chieftain was, in truth, one of nature's noblemen; crowned with dignity, full of an exuberant life, instinct with fire and energy, — a man born to command. At the head of his fiery horsemen, he was irresistible in the field; and no power then existing in the East was able to stand before him. Nor was he greater as a conqueror than as a political organizer and ruler. His conquests, once effected, were speedily regulated and bound together in a rude bar-

barian order. The Seljûk Sultans showed themselves capable of political conceptions and a governmental policy, which, considering their former social condition and mode of life, can only fill us with surprise. Their administration was not undeserving of the praise of true statesmanship. It was but a simple, inartificial, barbarian government; but it was a government full of vigor and efficiency, and in the main appears to have been mild, equitable, and just. Trade was fostered, the laws of the Koran were enforced, the great interests of society were protected; and their Moslem subjects, enjoying the fruits of their labors, lived in prosperity and peace.

The Turks have also proved themselves a deeply and earnestly religious people. Their conversion to Mohammedanism was sincere; and the Arabian Prophet has had few more devoted or more zealous followers than these wild shepherds of the North. Togrul rivalled the earlier Caliphs in observing the appointed forms of Mohammedan worship. He took care that mosques should be built in every important place: and with the mosques schools were established, in which the Koran was taught, and from which sprang a Moslem ministry not without some pretensions to culture and learning.

Yet, as a race, we must rank the Turks very far below the Arabs. For a certain low form of social order and civilization they showed a surprising aptitude; but beyond this point they have never advanced, have seemed incapable of advancing.

Their language is said to be smooth, flexible, harmonious, and capable of expressing all the forms of human thought; but no body of native poetry, like that which has been sung for ages in the wilds of Arabia, has ever enriched it. The vast and varied intellectual activity, the great public libraries, the schools of science and philosophy, the liberal culture and sound learning, which adorned the Saracen civilization, have had no counterparts in that of the Turks. Intellectually they have produced nothing, have added nothing to the wealth of mankind. They have never been able even to use to any good purpose the ample stores of which, by their union with their Arabic brethren, they came into full possession. The Empires which they founded were full of life and vigor; and in a rude, barbarian fashion, they were orderly and prosperous. There was no lack of industry and thrift, nor of public spirit and social virtues. Excellent roads, massive, spacious, and costly caravansaries, well-constructed stone bridges, and frequent fountains of pure water, marked all the great highways, — highways which were filled with the steady currents of a vast and well-protected traffic. Every village had its school, and every town its *medresseh*, or college, in which Moslem law and theology were diligently taught. But, with all this, the Turks have never outgrown the strain of their wild barbarian blood, have seemed wholly and permanently incapable of the activities and developments of a higher civilization. Before the Arabs there seems

to be the certain promise of some high and noble destiny yet to come. The future of the Turkish race is brightened by no such promise. They must be merged and lost in other races before they can rise to the order and enduring prosperity of a true civilization.

For twenty-five years, Togrul reigned "the father of his soldiers and people. By a firm and equal administration, Persia was relieved from the evils of anarchy; and the same hands which had been imbrued in blood became the guardians of justice and the public peace." [1]

Togrul Beg died in 1063, leaving his throne to his nephew Alp Arslan, "the valiant lion," a sovereign admired by the Mohammedan world as the perfection of manhood. Among all the heroes of Moslem history, it would seem that none had surpassed Alp Arslan in cool intrepidity and fiery valor. And in his treatment of Romanus Diogenes, the ablest and bravest of the later Greek Emperors, who, as the result of a bloody and terrible battle, remained a prisoner in his hands, he showed a magnanimity equal to his valor. Alp Arslan wrested Armenia from the Greeks, and pushed the boundary of his Empire westward to Antioch and the Black Sea. "The fairest portion of Asia was subject to his laws; twelve hundred princes, or the sons of princes, stood before his throne; and two hundred thousand soldiers marched under his banners." [2] Alp Arslan fell in 1072 by the dagger of a brave and des-

[1] Decline and Fall, vol. v. p. 508. [2] Idem, vol. v. p. 519.

perate prisoner, while meditating the conquest of Turkistan, the primitive home of his race; and the Moslem world was edified by this inscription upon his tomb:—

"O ye who have seen the glory of Alp Arslan exalted to the heavens, repair to Maru, and you will behold it buried in the dust."

Alp Arslan was succeeded by his eldest son, Malek Shah, who reigned from 1072 to 1092, and is pronounced by Gibbon, both in personal merit and the extent of his Empire, the greatest prince of his age. The government of Malek Shah was active and able, peaceful and prosperous. One act of his reign conferred a permanent benefit upon mankind. This was the rectification of the Persian calendar with an exactness almost equal to that now attained in our own.

During the lifetime of Malek Shah, the scions of his royal house were established in vice-royalties, which after his death became independent kingdoms. His eldest son retained possession of Persia; a second kingdom was established at Kerman upon the borders of India; a third had its capital at Damascus, and was known as a Syrian kingdom; while by the victorious career of Soliman, the head of another branch of the house of Seljûk, a fourth kingdom, a new and momentous conquest of the Moslem arms, was founded in Asia Minor. Almost the whole of this vast peninsula was easily wrested by Soliman from the feeble Greeks; and this new Mohammedan dominion, appropriately styled the kingdom of *Roum*, was firmly estab-

lished, with its capital at Nice, almost at the gates of Constantinople.

Another and yet more important achievement of some roving bodies of the wild shepherd warriors of Malek Shah was the wresting of Jerusalem from the Fatimite Caliphs of Egypt; for it was this conquest which set on foot the tremendous movement of the Crusades.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CRUSADES.[1]

JERUSALEM and most of the Holy Land, until subdued by the lieutenants of Malek Shah, had been for a considerable time in the possession of the Caliphs of Egypt, who had taken advantage of the weakness of their rivals at Bagdad to extend their dominions towards the East. For the four hundred years which had now elapsed since the surrender of Jerusalem to Omar in 637, under the comparatively mild and tolerant rule of the Caliphs, the Holy City had been freely open to the pilgrims of the Christian world. The Moslems had pushed their encroachments until they occupied three-fourths of the city; but the remaining quarter was possessed by the Christians, and was open to all pilgrims of their faith, upon the payment of a moderate tribute. Jerusalem was still regarded as the sacred centre of the Christian faith. Every branch of the Church — the Greek, the Roman, the Jacobite, the Coptic, the Abyssinian, the Armenian, the Nestorian, and the Georgian —

[1] Milman's Latin Christianity, Book VII. chap. vi., Book VIII. chaps. iv., ix., Book IX. chaps. i., vii., Book X. chap. iii; Gibbon, chaps. lviii., lix.

maintained there its own religious establishment, providing for its own form of worship, its pilgrims, and its poor. By their tribute, their gifts, and their trade, the vast crowd of pilgrims enriched Christian and Moslem alike.

The eleventh century, the time now under consideration, was the period when the modern nations of Western Europe were beginning to crystallize into form, and make their influence felt both at home and abroad. They were still in the depths of barbarism; but among the clergy and nobility something of order and civilization, some beginnings of light and social development, had appeared. It was a striking characteristic of the times, that side by side with barbarian violence and disorder, and amidst the constant display of the most brutal passions, there existed a strong religious feeling. Under the circumstances, this feeling could take no other form than that of a blind and puerile superstition. The prince, the noble, the man of wealth, and the priest were constantly impelled to atone for past wickedness, or to lay up a store of spiritual merit, by penances and austerities; or, more especially, by that most meritorious of all religious works, a pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre. Thus, in the eleventh century, by far the most numerous and influential class of the pilgrims who were constantly flocking from all quarters to Jerusalem were the Franks, or people of Western Europe. In the generation before the conquest of Jerusalem by the Turks, some of the high ecclesiastics of Germany marched

to the Holy Land at the head of a well-armed body of seven thousand pilgrims. In this company was Ingulphus, the secretary of William the Conqueror, then Duke of Normandy.

With the conquest of Asia Minor and Syria by the Turks, this ready access to Jerusalem was cut off. Those fierce and fanatical shepherds of the North abhorred the Christian name, and looked with no favor either upon Jerusalem itself, or the crowds of pilgrims who were constantly flocking thither. Their conquest of Jerusalem in 1076 was followed by the treacherous massacre of three thousand of its people; and their subsequent rule was the galling yoke of a relentless tyranny. The venerable Patriarch was dragged by the hair along the streets, and cast into a dungeon; the clergy of every sect were insulted; and the unhappy pilgrims were made to suffer every indignity and abuse. We can readily imagine what a storm of indignation and rage was produced throughout the West of Europe by the story of these Turkish enormities.

It was about the year 1096, that Peter the Hermit visited Jerusalem, and had his fiery soul stirred to its depths by what he saw and heard and felt of the insulting cruelty of the Turks. He returned to Europe with the one vehement purpose of rousing the nations of the West for the recovery of the holy sepulchre. With the benediction and earnest co-operation of Pope Urban II., he started upon his mission. The response to his impassioned appeals is among the

most remarkable phenomena of human history. From the king to the lowest peasant, the whole population seemed to catch the spirit of the impetuous monk, and to rise as one man for the recovery of Jerusalem, and the vindication of the Christian name. Long before the leaders of the movement were able to complete their preparations, a vast horde of three hundred thousand savage, half-armed, and half-naked peasants almost forced Peter to start at their head for the Holy Land. In the long journey through Central Europe, by the course of the Rhine and the Danube, constant atrocities and incredible sufferings marked their progress. About a third of their number were finally landed upon the shores of Asia; where, by the Turkish horsemen of the son and successor of Soliman, they were utterly routed and destroyed, only a vast pyramid of bones remaining to inform their successors of their fate.

Far different, however, was the issue of the regular and well-appointed expedition of the First Crusade, which under Godfrey of Bouillon, Hugh Count of Vermandois and brother of the King of France, Raymond of Toulouse, Bohemond, Tancred, and other able leaders, set forth the following year. This expedition embraced the flower of Europe, and was one of the mightiest armaments that the world had ever seen. When finally mustered in the plains of Bythinia, they numbered a hundred thousand horsemen in full armor; while the number of pilgrims present able to bear arms was computed at six hundred thou-

sand. Perhaps no great reliance can be placed on these numbers; but it is certain that the martial pilgrims formed a host which the imagination is hardly able to comprehend.

In the mere matter of strength, this great force was of course altogether irresistible. But it was a barbarian host, without discipline or skill, and worse, with no unity in counsel or command. Its attacks were little more than the blind struggles of brute force. Fits of spasmodic and fanatical valor were succeeded by wild disorder, and extravagant waste of their scanty supplies. Pestilence and famine thinned their ranks; and they were sometimes reduced to despair. In the course of three years their vast array had almost wholly melted away, though not until they had fully and splendidly achieved the great object of their expedition.

It was in the year 1097, that this great force began its assault upon the Turkish power. Their first enterprise was the siege of Nice, the capital of the new Turkish Kingdom of Roum. Aided by the Greek engineers, their arms were crowned with success. Nice fell into their hands, or rather into the hands of the Emperor; and the Turks retired to the mountains of the interior. The Crusaders then started upon their long overland journey of a thousand miles through Asia Minor and Syria to Jerusalem. Kilidge Arslan, or Soliman II., the Sultan of Roum, was fully awake to his danger, and urgently called his brothers to his assistance. They responded to his call; and at

the head of a great force he quietly awaited his opportunity as the Crusaders marched in careless disorder along the shores of the Mediterranean towards Antioch. Seizing a moment when his enemies were divided into two columns out of sight of each other, he fell suddenly upon the one farthest inland, and had almost overcome it, when sixty thousand horsemen from the other column came to its relief. The conflict was long and desperate ; but at length Turkish intrepidity yielded to the obstinate valor of the Franks. Soliman II. was utterly defeated, and at once abandoned the whole kingdom of Roum. So great was the terror inspired by their arms, that the Christians passed unresisted through the dangerous defiles of Cilicia, and did not again encounter an enemy until they encamped under the walls of Antioch.

As the crusaders emerged into Syria, Baldwin, a younger brother of Godfrey of Bouillon, was called to the aid of a petty Greek or Armenian prince whom the Turks had suffered to reign at Edessa, in Northern or Armenian Mesopotamia. Baldwin responded to the call ; but no sooner had he entered the city, and established his power, than he put his patron to death, seized his treasures, and made himself master of a considerable territory on both sides of the Euphrates.

At the siege of Antioch the helpless ignorance and want of military skill in a barbarian soldiery conspicuously appeared. For seven weary months the siege went on with hardly any perceptible progress, until

the cavalry of the besiegers was ruined, and they had suffered enormous losses. They were at last admitted to the city by the treachery of a Syrian apostate who held a command upon the walls. But hardly had they entered the city when they found themselves upon the very verge of destruction. The citadel refused to surrender; and very soon the city was invested by an immense Turkish force under Kerboga, Prince of Mosul. The Franks were rapidly sinking into hopeless despair, when an opportune imposture — the pretended discovery of the *holy lance*, the spear with which the side of Christ had been pierced at his crucifixion — again raised their courage, and inspired them with a fanatical valor before which nothing could stand. After a siege of five and twenty days, they sallied forth under the tremendous impulse of this new inspiration, and utterly routed a Turkish and Arabian army which, according to their report, numbered no less than six hundred thousand men. This great victory effectually broke, for the time, the power of the Seljûk princes in Western Asia. The Egyptians recovered Palestine and Jerusalem; and the Franks remained in quiet possession of Northern Syria.

This respite, however, was due rather to the weakness and terror of their enemies, than to any strength of their own. The sword, fatigue, famine, pestilence, and, above all, the unbridled license of a barbarian soldiery, had done their work, until the once mighty host presented but the shadow of its former greatness.

Of the sixty thousand horsemen who began the siege of Antioch, scarcely two hundred remained to take part in the final conflict. After the victory the question was seriously discussed, whether they should not abandon their purpose, and proceed no farther. But the impulse of superstitious enthusiasm prevailed, and they determined to persevere. This purpose, however, was not at once carried into effect. For ten months they rested and rioted in the pleasures of Syria. The next spring (1099) they got together a force of forty thousand men, of whom not more than twenty thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse were fit for service, and started southward on their long march of three hundred miles to Jerusalem. Bohemond remained behind as prince of Antioch; but three great and noble leaders — Godfrey, Raymond, and the chivalrous and peerless Tancred — persevered to the final accomplishment of their purpose.

As far as Cæsarea they proceeded by easy marches along the coast, receiving plentiful supplies by sea. From Cæsarea they struck inland to Jerusalem, and seem to have met with little or no opposition until they sat down before the walls of the holy city. After a siege of forty days, during which they suffered greatly from want of water and supplies, they surmounted the walls, and Jerusalem was won.

The merciless Franks did not fail to inflict a terrible vengeance for their own sufferings and the indignities which had been heaped upon their religion and their race. The Jews were burned in their

synagogues ; and seventy thousand Moslems were put to the sword. For three days the city was given up to indiscriminate pillage and massacre, until a pestilence was bred by the putrefaction of the slain.

The great end was now attained ; the holy sepulchre was free, and the crusaders prepared to fulfil their vows. Bareheaded and with unshod feet, with every outward expression of humility and contrition, they ascended the hill of Calvary, kissed the stone which tradition affirmed had closed the sepulchre, and bedewed it with the tears of a religious enthusiasm no doubt both genuine and deep.

They then proceeded to the choice of a king, and the organization of their state. Their unanimous suffrage was given to Godfrey of Bouillon ; but, refusing the name of king in a city made sacred by the sufferings of Christ, he would accept only the title of Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre. The kingdom was organized upon a feudal basis ; and the usages of Western Europe were transplanted to the soil of Asia. Godfrey and his successors soon extended their dominion until it embraced nearly the whole of the ancient land of Israel ; and only the four cities of Aleppo, Damascus, Hamath, and Hums remained of all the Turkish conquests in Syria.

Thus did this mighty movement of the first crusade, wild and wasteful as its course had been, and tremendous as had been its losses, accomplish a really great result. It restored to the Greek Emperors the western half and all the seacoast of Asia Minor,

and founded in Syria and Mesopotamia the three strong Christian principalities of Edessa, Antioch, and Jerusalem. Soliman II. had recovered a portion of his lost dominions in Asia Minor; but his kingdom now embraced but a small territory upon the highlands in the interior of the peninsula, with its capital at Iconium.

This repression of the Turkish power was, however, but temporary. Everywhere the Moslems were filled with the deepest grief and shame, and the intensest longing to wipe away the disgrace which had fallen upon their religion and themselves. It was not long before this end was attained. Two great Moslem leaders arose, whose abilities and virtues not only emulated but surpassed those of the earlier champions of their faith, and extorted the unwilling homage of the Christians themselves. These two men bore the illustrious names of Noureddin and Saladin.[1]

Noureddin was the grandson of a favorite officer of Malek Shah, whose hereditary government was the province of Aleppo in the North of Syria. In the period of darkness and distress following the first crusade, Noureddin was invested by the Caliph of Bagdad with the important government of Mosul, and named the leader and champion of the Moslems.

[1] The more exact orthography of these names is Nûr-ed-Din and Selâh-ed-Din. The latter name signifies "The Safety of Religion." The real name of Saladin was Yûsef ibn Aiyûb, that is, Joseph the son of Job; whence his royal line is known as the dynasty of the Aiyûbites.

The choice proved most judicious and fortunate. The new Sultan at once attacked and stormed Edessa, and put an end to the Latin principality of Baldwin, after it had existed for fifty-four years. He occupied Syria as far as Damascus; and finally, after a long and doubtful struggle, subdued the heretical, Ali-worshipping Caliphs of Cairo, and added Egypt to his Empire.

Friends and enemies alike have celebrated the greatness and the virtues of Noureddin. "The Latins themselves were compelled to own the wisdom and courage, and even the justice and piety, of this implacable adversary. In his life and government the holy warrior revived the zeal and simplicity of the first Caliphs. Gold and silk were banished from his palace, the use of wine from his dominions; the public revenue was scrupulously applied to the public service; and the frugal household of Noureddin was maintained from his legitimate share of the spoil, which he vested in the purchase of a private estate. His favorite sultana sighed for some female object of expense. 'Alas!' replied the king, 'I fear God, and am no more than the treasurer of the Moslems. Their property I cannot alienate; but I still posess three shops in the city of Hems: these you may take, and these alone can I bestow.' His chamber of justice was the terror of the great, and the refuge of the poor. Some years after the Sultan's death, an oppressed subject called aloud in the streets of Damascus, 'O Noureddin, Noureddin, where art thou

now? Arise, arise to pity and protect us!' A tumult was apprehended; and a living tyrant blushed or trembled at the name of a departed monarch." [1]

During the reign of Noureddin, Damascus, so long the imperial seat of the Saracen Caliphs, became once more the capital of a great Mohammedan Empire. Of this ancient and beautiful city, Noureddin proved himself one of the greatest benefactors. He rebuilt, strengthened, and adorned it, and established there a court of justice which became famous throughout the Moslem world.[2]

The Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, small and feeble from the beginning, and now no longer defended by the arms of able and valiant princes, seemed poorly able to withstand the power of Noureddin. It was destined, however, to outlast his reign, and to fall before the arms of his greater successor, Saladin.

This remarkable man holds a conspicuous position upon the pages of history, not only on account of his greatness as a sovereign and a soldier, his magnanimity and Moslem virtues, but as being, perhaps, the only man who in the long course of thousands of years has ever made illustrious the ancient and untamable race of the Kûrds. In Saladin, for the first and only time, the Christians encountered a great Moslem leader of their own Japhetic blood. The Saracens were of the race of Shem; the Turks are Tartar or Turanian; but the Kûrds are of the

[1] Gibbon, vol. vi. p. 16.

[2] See Porter's Five Years in Damascus, vol. i. p. 117.

kindred of the ancient Medes, and belong to the Japhetic or Indo-European race.

These wild mountain shepherds found a congenial service in the armies of their neighbor, the Sultan of Mosul. One of them, Shiracouah by name, attained to the foremost rank among the generals of Noureddin. Saladin was a nephew of Shiracouah; and his eminent abilities early attracted the notice of Noureddin. He rose rapidly from one post of command and responsibility to another, until, at Noureddin's death, he was left viceroy of Egypt. The son of Noureddin was but eleven years old; and Saladin, now the ablest and most powerful man of the Moslem world, was soon invested by the Caliph of Bagdad with all the titles of supreme authority. Saladin did not long want a convenient pretext for attacking his Frankish neighbors in Palestine; and in 1187, eighty-eight years after its surrender to the knights of the first crusade, Jerusalem fell into his hands.

The second crusade, which was hardly inferior in numbers to the first, and far surpassed it in the dignity of its leaders, was led in person by Conrad III., Emperor of Germany, and Louis VII., King of France. It was called forth by the preaching of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, an apostle surpassing Peter the Hermit in the power of his eloquence, and immeasurably his superior in ability and elevation of character.

This mighty armament moved for the Holy Land in 1147. But the Greek Emperors, no longer fearing the weakened Turks, and looking with an evil eye

upon these tremendous movements from the West, before which they were well aware that they might themselves be swept away, as they actually were by the fourth crusade, received the two sovereigns with secret and even open hostility. Moving in the track of the first crusade, but without harmony or concert, they penetrated separately into Asia Minor, where first Conrad, and afterwards Louis, was completely defeated by the Turks. Falling back to the coast, they proceeded to Syria with a poor remnant of their once mighty host, where an ineffectual siege of Damascus was the inglorious end of the second crusade.

The third crusade was caused by the sad tale of the fall of Jerusalem ; and, like the second, was led by the sovereigns in person. Frederic Barbarossa of Germany gathered the forces of his Empire upon the plains of Hungary, and marched overland; while Richard Cœur de Lion of England, and Philip Augustus of France, transported their armaments by sea. This crusade took place in 1190 and 1191. Frederic met the fate of Conrad in Asia Minor; and but five thousand men, the feeble remnant of his great army, finally arrived in Syria. The kings of England and France reached their destination in safety, and laid siege to Acre. For two years, about the walls of that unimportant town, they wore out their strength in a tremendous and equal struggle with the forces of Saladin. Acre finally fell into their hands, but they were in no condition to follow up their advantage ; and by this time the combatants had

learned to respect each other. The war finally ended in a treaty which stipulated that for three years and three months all hostilities should cease, that the Franks should hold the seacoast, and that the pilgrimage to Jerusalem should remain open and free.

When Saladin signed this treaty with King Richard, in 1193, he was already in feeble health; and he did not long survive. His death occurred the same year, and is described by Mohammedan writers as a most edifying triumph of their faith. That faith has produced no greater hero, and none more worthy of our admiration, than Saladin. His bravery and great qualities as a sovereign and military leader have passed into the common traditions of mankind. But these eminent qualities do not constitute his highest claim upon our esteem. He was a large-hearted, generous man, and displayed a mercy and magnanimity in his treatment of those placed in his power by the fortunes of war, which were rare indeed in the sanguinary struggles of those evil times. His religion was earnest and sincere; and no man probably ever fought for his faith and his people with more perfect honesty of purpose. He was a simple, uninstructed Kûrd; his mind had never been enlarged by culture and education; he had as little appreciation as knowledge of literature and philosophy; and the only books he regarded with favor were those containing the orthodox teachings of his faith. But the Koran was always in his hands, even on horseback, and in the face of hostile armies. His dress was always of the

simplest and coarsest materials ; he was rigidly temperate and chaste, and expended little or nothing upon his own pleasures and enjoyments. His justice was exact and impartial, and his administration so able and prudent that amidst all his wars the public burdens were diminished, and universal prosperity was enjoyed. In the midst of the great struggles of the crusades, the sovereigns of Europe made no secret of their admiration for him, and boasted of his friendship whenever they were able to secure it. In this fact we have certainly the highest compliment that could have been paid to his personal character. With the death of Saladin his Empire was dissolved. Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo became the capitals of three independent emirs, or sultans ; "and the Franks or Latins stood, and breathed, and hoped, in their fortresses along the Syrian coast." [1]

As the crusades concern our present purpose only so far as they affected the Turkish power, all of those great movements following the third may be dismissed with a few words.

The anger excited in the Western nations by the ill-disguised hostility of the Greek Emperors diverted the fourth crusade from its original purpose, and turned it against Constantinople. The result, and the only result of this crusade, was the capture of Constantinople in 1204, and the temporary subjugation of the Greek Empire.

The fifth crusade was directed against Egypt, and

[1] Decline and Fall, vol. vi. p. 36.

ended in utter failure. To this crusade, however, belongs the ill-starred expedition afterwards undertaken by Frederic II. of Germany. Under the ban of the Pope and the Church, because he had first refused to fulfil his vow of military service in the East, and then resumed it contrary to the Pope's injunction, Frederic marched to the holy land, and succeeded in occupying Jerusalem. But the whole of Syria was soon overrun by a band of Carismian shepherds from the east of the Caspian, who almost annihilated in a single battle the Christian forces in the Holy Land.

The last two crusades, the sixth and seventh, were led by St. Louis (Louis IX.), King of France; and resulted, the first in his captivity in Egypt, the other in his death while vainly attempting the capture of Tunis.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MONGULS.

THE course of events was now suddenly changed by one of the most tremendous political convulsions which has ever devastated the earth. The power of the Turks had been broken by the first crusade; from this shock it had recovered only to be annihilated for the time by the conquests of the Monguls and Tartars, under the terrible Ghengis Khan and his successors.

The vast plains to the north of the Caspian Sea, the Altai Mountains, and the Chinese Empire — the same regions from which the Turks had originally issued — were still occupied by numberless tribes similar to them in manners and origin, belonging to the same Tartar, or Scythian race. Ghengis was the hereditary chief of one of these tribes, but, by his ability and prowess, gradually extended his dominion until it stretched from the Great Wall of China to the Volga, embracing an innumerable multitude of the fierce shepherd warriors of the North. This terrible host he organized, armed, and disciplined with the skill of a veteran commander, in preparation for some great

conquest in more civilized lands. His first and easiest conquest, won in four years, and accomplished in 1214, was the five northern provinces of China; his second carried him to the banks of the Indus.

Among the powers which had sprung up out of the ruins of the Empire of Malek Shah, was the kingdom of Mohammed the Carismian, having its seat in the fruitful and populous region east of the Caspian, and extending to the Persian Gulf and the Indus. It was the final defeat of the son of Mohammed, which sent a horde of Carismian warriors to ravage Syria, and annihilate the forces of Frederic II.

Ghengis, now the mighty Khan or Emperor of the Tartar race, desired to maintain friendly relations with the Carismian Sultan; but a most rash and wicked outrage on the part of the latter changed this friendly disposition to the fiercest hostility.

A Tartar caravan of three ambassadors and a hundred merchants was waylaid and slain by the order of Mohammed; and, when justice had been demanded and refused, Ghengis gathered his countless hosts for war. Mohammed was speedily overwhelmed. His son Gelaleddin gathered new armies, and with heroic valor and constancy fought the Tartar invaders step by step to the end; but all was without avail. A war of six years served to blot the Empire of Mohammed out of existence, and transform those once flourishing and populous regions into a dreary, desolate waste. For thirty centuries South-western Asia had been but too familiar with the destroying march of barbarian con-

querors ; but the world had never beheld a scene of destruction so complete and appalling as that left behind him by Ghengis Khan. The fields were ravaged, the towns and cities destroyed, and, excepting the artisans who were made slaves, the whole population was put to the sword. At length upon the banks of the Indus, the Tartar warriors, wearied with victory and slaughter, and overladen with spoil, demanded to be led back to their native plains. Upon his return, Ghengis met two of his generals who had been detached from the main body of his army to march towards the West. They had overrun Western Persia, and then turning northwards through Armenia, Georgia, and the Caucasian Mountains, had accomplished, for the first and only time in history, the military circuit of the Caspian Sea. Some further conquests in the North ended the personal achievements of Ghengis, who died in 1227.

The religion of Ghengis Khan was a vague monotheism, which seems in part to have been an improvement of his own upon the Paganism of the Scythian deserts. But, while he adopted this as the religion of the state, he affected to treat all other religions with perfect toleration, and even with equal respect. In this respect Ghengis was honorably distinguished from his successor in the bloody list of conquerors and tyrants, Timour or Tamarlane. "The Tartars and Monguls were addicted to the idols of their peculiar tribes ; and many of them had been converted by foreign missionaries to the religions of Moses, of

Mahomet, and of Christ. These various systems in freedom and concord were taught and practised within the precincts of the same camp; and the Bonze, the Imam, the Rabbi, the Nestorian and the Latin priest, enjoyed the same honorable exemption from service and tribute.[1]

The sceptre which had dropped from the expiring hand of Ghengis was taken up and swayed by his sons and grandsons through four successive reigns,[2] and a period of seventy-five years, with a terrible and murderous energy of conquest, exceeding that of Ghengis himself. With little resistance, but infinite slaughter, China was conquered, and made a Tartar Empire; Persia was wholly subdued; Bagdad fell, and with it the last feeble remnant of the ancient Empire of the Saracens. They penetrated the Arabian desert, and almost to the waters of the Nile; but here, by the valor of the Mamalukes,[3] their course was stayed, and Egypt was saved. They overran Armenia, and the Turkish Kingdom of Roum; but, from the Christian territories of Constantinople and Trebizond,[4] they

[1] Gibbon, vol. vi. p. 206.

[2] Ghengis was succeeded by his son Octai, and he in turn by his son Gayuk. The crown then passed successively to Mangou and Cublai, the sons of Tuli, another of the four sons of Ghengis. Holagou Khan, the conqueror of Bagdad, was the brother and lieutenant of Mangou and Cublai.

[3] The Mamalukes were an army of Scythian captives, bought by the degenerate successors of Saladin in the Syrian markets, and trained in the martial exercises of the camp. By their ferocious valor they saved Egypt from the Tartars only to become themselves its masters, and to make themselves a dreaded name in the wars of the middle ages. See Upham's History of the Ottoman Empire, chap. ix.

[4] When Constantinople was taken by the crusaders in 1204, a member of

strangely turned aside. They penetrated the frozen regions of Siberia, and subdued the southern kingdoms of Thibet, Corea, Cochinchina, Pegu, and Bengal. Nor were their conquests limited to the land. With a fleet of a thousand ships they invaded the East Indian Archipelago as far, apparently, as the Island of Borneo. Three-fourths of Asia were thus desolated by their arms.

Yet more disastrous, and more threatening to the future prospects of mankind, were their conquests in Europe. They laid waste and permanently occupied the vast territories of Russia, which remained for two hundred years under Tartar rule;[1] they overwhelmed Poland, destroyed the cities of Lublin and Cracow, and advanced to Lignitz, where they defeated a great German army, filling nine sacks with the right ears of the slain. Thence they turned southward to Hungary, which they left covered with the dead bodies of its people. Bosnia, Servia, and Bulgaria were laid waste; and not only Constantinople, but all Europe, trembled upon the brink of destruction. But the destroying host, sated at last with slaughter, paused in its career, and retired.[2]

the imperial family, Alexius by name, was governor of Trebizond, at the south-east corner of the Black Sea. He at once assumed the title of Emperor; and for two hundred and fifty-six years he and his successors continued to play at imperial greatness in that narrow and distant province. This was perhaps the most minute "Empire" that history has ever known.

[1] See Stanley's History of the Eastern Church, Lecture X.

[2] These Western conquests were effected during the reign of Octai, by the arms of Batou, a fourth son of Tuli, and brother of Mangou, Cublai, and Holagou. The return of Batou was hastened by the death of Octai.

At length, after two generations had been overwhelmed by its terrible force, the conquering impulse expended itself, and the wave of barbaric invasion receded. The Turks, their enormous losses in part made good by accessions from their ruder kindred, remained in possession of their old territories; each emir, in the absence of any central authority, being independent in his own province.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OTTOMAN TURKS.

WE come now to what, in our present subject, is the opening of modern history — the founding of an Empire which has played a great part in the political world almost to our own times, and which still engrosses, even in the last stages of decay, no small part of the attention of mankind.

The Ottoman Sultans, like their predecessors of the house of Seljûk, derived their name from the father of their imperial line. It will be recollected, that, after the conquest of the Carismian kingdom of Mohammed, Ghengis Khan retired with his victorious armies to the plains of the North. No sooner had he departed, than Gelaleddin the son of Mohammed returned from his flight into India, in the hope of recovering his paternal dominions. But after an heroic struggle, in which he fought in person fourteen battles, he was at last overwhelmed by the Tartar hosts, and ended his life a fugitive in the mountains of Kûrdistan. His final defeat dissolved an army made up largely of various tribes of Turks. Some of these tribes, as we have already seen, being

thus left without a king or a home, invaded Syria, almost exterminated the Frankish forces in the Holy Land, and captured and sacked Jerusalem. Others of the less powerful were content to seek refuge and service in Asia Minor with the Sultan of Iconium. At the head of one of these obscure tribes, was the father of the imperial Ottoman line. The name of this petty chieftain was Ortogrul. About the year 1245, at the head of some four hundred Turkish families, he established himself upon the River Sangar, near the borders of the Greek dominions, and about two hundred miles south-east from Constantinople. Thaman, or Athman, the son of Ortogrul, was the founder of the kingdom so greatly extended by his descendants; and his name, slightly varied into Othman, the Arabic appellation of the third of the Caliphs, was destined to give its title to the Ottoman race.

Gathering about him a little army of adventurers, Othman made himself master of a considerable territory wrested from the Greeks. Finally, in his old age, and through the arms of his son Orchan, he obtained possession of Brûsa, an important town and military post of Bythinia. Succeeding his father, Orchan made Brûsa his residence, and the capital of a small kingdom, really independent, though nominally subject to the Sultan of Iconium.

The capture of Brûsa, in 1326, is the event from which must be dated the founding of the Ottoman Empire; and Orchan, though himself satisfied with

the humble title of emir, must be regarded as the first of the imperial Ottoman line. By the eminent ability which he displayed in founding, extending, and regulating his little kingdom, Orchan proved himself worthy of this distinguished honor. In him and his successors, as in the three great sovereigns of the house of Seljûk, we are profoundly impressed by the wonderful aptitude of these rude children of the Scythian deserts for government and command; for calling out of the chaos which surrounded them the political order, vigor, and prosperity of a well-organized, semi-civilized state. The order, energy, and military strength, and not alone these indications of an able and efficient administration, but the culture, the regular administration of justice, and the general quiet and prosperity, which had marked the government of the old Seljûk Sultans, were speedily reproduced at Brûsa. The loose Turkish squadrons of Othman were replaced by an organized and disciplined army of twenty-five thousand men, strengthened by a train of battering-engines for sieges. The effectiveness of this new military force was soon displayed in the conquest of the cities of Nice and Nicomedia, and all that remained of the Greek province of Bythinia, to the Hellespont, the Bosphorus, and the gates of Constantinople. A mosque and royal hospital were established; and coin bearing the stamp of the new dynasty replaced the old Seljûk currency. Most important of all, perhaps, a college was founded at Brûsa, at which the ablest professors

of Moslem learning attracted students from all parts of the Mohammedan world.

While Orchan was thus extending his dominion to the seacoast, his brother emirs farther south were doing the same thing ; and Asia Minor was finally lost to the Greeks. But while the Greeks had suffered so much from the arms of Orchan, so highly did they esteem him for his virtues and ability, that they were not ashamed to form with him a matrimonial alliance. The princess Theodora was added to the number of the Turkish emir's wives, and he became the son-in-law of the Emperor John Cantacuzene; one of the very few instances which have ever occurred of such an ill-starred connection between a Christian sovereign and the great enemies of his faith. But Cantacuzene was beset by difficulties ; and no doubt vainly persuading himself that the Turks would have no wish to establish themselves in Europe, he hoped to avail himself safely of the help of his new and unnatural allies against the Servians and Bulgarians, by whom he was hard pressed upon the west. Orchan readily listened to the call of his father-in-law, and sent his son Soliman to his assistance with ten thousand horsemen, — a fatal expedition, in which the Turks crossed the Hellespont *never to return ;* for Orchan took care to make good the foothold which he had been permitted to gain in Thrace.

Orchan was succeeded in 1360 by his son Amurath (or, more properly, Murad) I. Amurath occupied with little resistance the whole province of Thrace,

all that now remained of the Greek dominions west of Constantinople; and removed his capital from Brûsa to Adrianople, a large and important city in the centre of his new province, and about a hundred and twenty-five miles north-west from Constantinople. Thus firmly established in Europe, he turned his arms against the Servians. Contemporaneous with John Cantacuzene (from about 1440 to 1455) had reigned the great Stephen Dushan, Emperor, or Czar, of the Servians. This able prince was at the head of a powerful state, embracing the Bulgarians, Servians, and other Sclavonic tribes which in the course of centuries had filled the depopulated regions of ancient Macedonia and Mœsia. His Empire extended from the borders of Greece to the Danube and the Save. It was a Christian state, rapidly rising into order and civilization, and held no inferior position among the nations of mediæval Europe.[1] Its history, however, was brief and sad. Its power and glory were founded by Stephen Dushan only to be soon destroyed by the conquests of the Turks. Stephen Dushan was dead. His son and heir had been put to death by a treacherous minister; and, when Amurath turned his arms against the Servians, their unconsolidated Empire was ill prepared to withstand his assaults. In repeated and successful expeditions, Amurath passed the Balkan Mountains to ravage the pleasant and fruitful regions in the valley of the Danube. From these expeditions he brought back, not, indeed, silver and gold, but a

[1] Ranke's History of Servia, chaps. i., ii.

more valuable spoil of hardy and warlike captives; for it was from the chosen youth of these Christian captives, that he and his ministers organized the famous and formidable force of the Janizaries, which soon became the strongest support of the Turkish throne. These Christian boys, trained in the Mohammedan religion, and to the highest military skill, formed a body of soldiers to which nothing in the armies of any Christian sovereign of that age could be compared, and made the name of the Janizaries long a terror to the Christian world. At length, upon the fatal field of Kossova, the power of the Servian Empire was finally broken; but upon that field Amurath himself lost his life by the dagger of a Servian noble who suddenly started up from among the heaps of the slain.

Amurath I. was succeeded in 1389 by his son Bajazet (Byazid) I.; surnamed Yeldrim, or the Thunderbolt. And never did barbarian warrior better deserve the name, either for his terrible energy, the swiftness of his movements, or the overwhelming force of his conquering march. On the east he subdued the Turkish emirs upon the western coast, conquered the Sultan of Iconium his titular sovereign, and extended his dominions to the Euphrates. On the west he subjugated Macedonia, Thessaly, Bulgaria, and Moldavia, and crossed the Danube to encounter upon the plains of Hungary the armies of Western Europe. At the terrible battle of Nicopolis in 1396, Bajazet utterly routed and nearly annihilated a Hungarian,

German, and French army of a hundred thousand men. But after this victory, and while boasting that he would subdue Germany and Italy, and feed his horse upon the altar of St. Peter's at Rome, his career was checked by a long and painful attack of the gout. Hitherto the Ottoman princes had borne only the title of emir. But Bajazet now assumed the highest dignity acknowledged by his race, in accepting from the Caliphs of Egypt a patent giving him the rank of Sultan.

As a sovereign within his own dominions, Bajazet is not without some title to our applause. Personally he was cruel and licentious to the last degree; but with a terrible energy he insisted upon justice and virtue in his subordinates; and a considerable degree of good order prevailed throughout his Empire. One of his chamberlains, who was accused of having drunk the goat's milk of a poor woman, he commanded to be disembowelled in his presence. On another occasion, enraged at the general perversion of justice, he gathered the lawyers and judges into a single building, as if to burn them together. His ministers stood trembling in silence, expecting to see the torch applied; when an Ethiopian buffoon suggested a remedy, and saved the judges, by hinting that a better way would be to remove them from temptation by a fixed and adequate salary. Even military license was sternly restrained; and harvests were peacefully reaped and sold within the very borders of his camps.

The Greek Empire was now narrowed almost to the

walls of Constantinople; and that city itself seemed to be at the mercy of Bajazet. As the price of his forbearance, he exacted an annual tribute of thirty thousand crowns of gold, and the establishment within the city of a mosque, and a Turkish *kadi*, or judge. On these terms, he concluded a truce with the Emperor for ten years. But this compact was soon violated; and Constantinople seemed upon the verge of doom, when the strong man armed was assailed by a stronger than he, and himself made to bite the dust.

CHAPTER IX.

TAMARLANE.

THE course of our narrative now brings us to notice the career of another of those human monsters whose boundless power and great abilities have been employed only to desolate the world, and destroy their kind. The armies of Ghengis had revelled in slaughter and destruction until they had wasted with fire and sword, and drenched in blood, half the continent of Asia. The conquests of Timour equalled those of Ghengis in murderous and insatiate cruelty, and far surpassed them in extent. Ghengis had been an illiterate barbarian of the Scythian deserts. Timour was a native of the populous and comparatively civilized region east of the Caspian. His great natural gifts had been, to some extent, improved by culture and study; he affected a taste for intellectual pursuits, and ostentatiously patronized letters and science. A fanatical Mohammedan, and a Turk rather than a Tartar,[1] he visited Tartar, Turk, and Christian alike with the same relentless extermination. Almost every captured city was given to the

[1] See note by Milman, Decline and Fall, vol. vi. p. 205.

sword and the flames; and the heads of its slaughtered citizens were piled in hideous pyramids without its walls. A pyramid of ninety thousand heads marked the ruin of Bagdad; and similar trophies were reared at Delhi, at Ispahan, at Aleppo and Damascus. As the waves of his invasions rolled away, they left everywhere the same hideous chaotic waste.

Timour, or Tamarlane,[1] was remotely connected, at least on his mother's side, with the royal family of Ghengis. He was born about forty miles south of Samarcand, the hereditary prince of a petty Tartar, or more properly Turkish, tribe. His birth occurred in the times of confusion attendant upon the breaking-up of the great Mongul Empire. It was this circumstance which gave the impelling force to his great career. His native province was in a state of anarchy; supreme authority there was none; society was the helpless prey of domestic violence and foreign foes. In this state of things, he stood forth as the deliverer of his country. The story of the years which followed, full of heroic adventures, and of more heroic fortitude and steadfastness, is the most honorable chapter of his life. A man so patient and so sagacious, so able and so brave, could not fail to succeed; and in 1370 he established himself firmly upon the throne of Samarcand. With this success, his vast schemes began to unfold. His ambition was simply boundless; and, unhappily for the world, his ability was equal to his ambition. Few commanders

[1] Timour-lenc, or lame Timour; he was lame of a hand and a foot.

with a military genius surpassing his have ever lived. His aim was nothing less than the conquest of the world; and, calling to his standard the shepherd tribes of the North, he soon entered upon his terrible career.

He first invaded East Tartary, or Turkistan, which he ravaged for many successive years, and thoroughly subdued, and then turned to wreak his vengeance upon the Getes (or Jits, who were simply unconverted Turks) for wrongs which in earlier times he had suffered at their hands. Persia and Mesopotamia next felt the destroying force of his arms, until from the Oxus to the Persian Gulf, and from Ormuz to the Georgian Mountains, those wide regions were wholly prostrate at his feet. He then turned northward again, to chastise an ungrateful client whom he had himself established upon the Mongul throne of Kipzak, or West Tartary, and within whose dominions European Russia seems to have been included. This barbarian sovereign had turned against his benefactor, had invaded his dominions with an immense Tartar and Russian host, had burned his palace, and compelled him, in the depth of winter, to contend for his capital and his life. The provocation had been great, and terrible was the retribution. At the head of a mighty host which stretched thirteen miles from wing to wing, he swept over the north-western plains, met and defeated the Kipzak army, subdued every tribe, penetrated on his westward course far into European Russia, and then, turning southward, carried havoc to

the shores of the Black Sea. His next great enterprise was the conquest of Hindostan, which he traversed in its whole breadth, from the Indies to the Ganges. This expedition was undertaken with no thought of permanently occupying the subjugated country, but in the mere lust of conquest and spoil. The country was wasted by Timour, only to be at once abandoned. He little dreamed that a descendant of his in the fifth generation would a third time conquer Hindostan, found the throne of the Great Mogul at Delhi, perpetuate his own blood in a line of sovereigns among the most magnificent in history, and found an Empire the poor shadow of which has endured almost to the present day.

Timour was recalled from India by tidings of disturbances at home, and of the hostile attitude of Bajazet. Upon his return, he addressed to that haughty conqueror the following characteristic epistle: "Dost thou not know that the greatest part of Asia is subject to our arms and our laws, that our invincible forces extend from one sea to the other, that the potentates of the earth form a line before our gate, and that we have compelled Fortune herself to watch over our Empire? What is the foundation of thy insolence and folly? Thou has fought some battles in the woods of Anatolia — contemptible trophies! Thou hast obtained some victories over the Christians of Europe; thy sword was blessed by the Apostle of God; and thy obedience to the precept of the Koran, in waging war against the infidels, is the sole consid-

eration that prevents us from destroying thy country, the frontier and bulwark of the Moslem world. Repent, and avert the thunder of our vengeance, which is yet suspended over thy head. Thou art no more than a pismire; why wilt thou seek to provoke the elephants? Alas! they will trample thee under their feet."

Stung to madness by these words, Bajazet replied in the bitterest and most insulting terms that could possibly be addressed to an Oriental sovereign. After calling him a mere robber, a thief of the desert, and telling him that his victories had only been won through the weakness of his enemies, he proceeded thus: "Thy armies are innumerable? be they so; but what are the arrows of the flying Tartar against the cimeters and battle-axes of my firm and invincible Janizaries? I will guard the princes who have sought my protection: seek them in my tents. The cities of Arzingan and Erzeroum are mine; and, unless the tribute be duly paid, I will demand the arrears under the walls of Tauris and Sultania. If I fly from thy arms, may my wives be thrice divorced from my bed; but, if thou hast not the courage to meet me in the field, mayest thou again receive thy wives after they have thrice endured the embraces of a stranger."[1]

These mutual insults could only be wiped out in blood; but, content for the present with the capture of Sivas, Timour turned aside for the invasion of Syria and Egypt. Aleppo and Damascus were taken

[1] Decline and Fall, vol. vi. p. 258.

and destroyed; but so stubborn was the resistance of the Mamalukes that his progress in this direction was stayed; and he turned back for a decisive conflict with Bajazet, the only foe whom he ever encountered really worthy of his steel.

The struggle was approached with careful preparation on both sides, and both were confident of success. But in a tremendous battle fought near Angora, in the centre of Asia Minor, Timour was victorious; and Bajazet was taken prisoner, to follow the conqueror's march (as it was said) in an iron cage, and die in a miserable captivity. Asia Minor was wasted with fire and sword to the very shores of the Bosphorus; and the want of ships alone prevented Timour from passing into Europe.

Turk, Greek, and Egyptian were now equally zealous and obsequious in their submission; and, satisfied at last, Timour abandoned his conquests, and returned to enjoy a short two months of revelry and triumph at Samarcand. Then, although already seventy years of age, he gathered his forces for the most distant and most stupendous enterprise of his reign, — the conquest of China. But this last and greatest of his undertakings he was destined never to accomplish. On his way to China he was seized with a fever, and died in 1405. With his death, his vast Empire melted away like a fabric of summer clouds.

Thus ended the last and most terrible of those great inundations of Northern barbarism, which for a thousand years had not ceased, at short intervals, to be poured forth over the civilized world.

CHAPTER X.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE.

WHEN Timour finally retired from Asia Minor, he left the Turkish power completely broken and humbled in the dust. Under the pressure of the deadly peril which menaced both alike, Soliman the son of Bajazet, who commanded in Thrace, had made common cause with the Greeks; and, by diligently guarding the waters of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, they had prevented Timour from crossing into Europe. But the Turkish Kingdom was left without a head; the Janizaries were destroyed; Roumelia, as the European conquests of the Turks were called, was but a conquered country, in which they had little strength; and Asia Minor was ruined.

Mr. Senior, a recent writer of high authority, gives the following as the words of an intelligent and trustworthy Christian gentleman with whom he met in Turkey: "When the Turks first swarmed over Asia Minor, Roumelia, and Bulgaria, they seized on a country very populous, and of enormous wealth. For three hundred and fifty years they kept on consuming that wealth, and wearing out that population.

If a Turk wanted a house or a garden, he turned out a *rayah;* if he wanted money, he put a bullet into a handkerchief, tied it in a knot, and sent it to the nearest opulent Greek or Armenian. At last, having lived for three centuries and a half on their capital of things and of men, having reduced that rich and well-peopled country to the desert which you now see it, they find themselves poor."[1]

I have cited these words to point out their singular injustice to the founders of the Ottoman Empire, and the strange forgetfulness or perversion of the truth which they imply. These statements are but partially true, even of the European Provinces. Long before the days of Amurath I., Thrace had been impoverished and depopulated by constant wars; while Servia and Bulgaria were but half-enlightened regions, just emerging into order and civilization.

As applied to the greater part of Asia Minor, these words are yet farther from the truth. When, about 1080, the Seljûk Soliman first conquered the peninsula, and established there the Kingdom of Roum, he found the country comparatively rich and populous. But consumed by the fierce tribes which followed his standard, wasted a second time by the Tartar hosts of the sons of Ghengis, and finally swept as with the besom of destruction by the wild hordes of Timour, Asia Minor had been left, at last, a ruined and desolate land. The cities had been impoverished and largely depopulated; the open

[1] Senior's Journal in Turkey and Greece, p. 210.

country had been swept of its inhabitants, and filled with Turkish and Tartar tribes. Asia Minor had, in fact, been as completely desolated and resettled by the Turks and Tartars, as was ancient Gaul by the Franks, or Britain by the Anglo-Saxons; and whatever of wealth, prosperity, and culture the country has since enjoyed, has been in great part a new growth under Ottoman rule.

The Turkish power had been bowed to the earth by the arms of Timour; but no sooner had the waves of invasion receded than it rose again with new vigor. The instinct of union and nationality was strong in the breasts of all the leading Turks, and among the great body of their followers; and they only awaited the voice of a leader to fall obediently into line. After ten years of civil strife between the sons of Bajazet, Mohammed I. was established upon his father's throne in 1413. Mohammed I. was a prince of ability, and, in the eyes of his people, of many virtues. In him adversity had subdued the fiery spirit of his race; and, through the eight years of his peaceful reign, he devoted himself with earnestness and success to heal the wounds of the state, and restore its order and prosperity. In 1421 the Ottoman name recovered its full splendor with the accession of Amurath II., the best and noblest prince whose name had yet adorned the Ottoman annals. The equal of any of his predecessors in ability, and in the wisdom and energy of his administration, he far surpassed them all in private virtue and the excel-

lence of his character. According to the ideas of his people and his age, he was not only just and virtuous, but eminently religious. He enjoys the singular honor of having twice abdicated the throne for the ascetic life of a dervish, and of having been twice compelled by the public danger to re-ascend it contrary to his own inclinations. Amurath was first recalled from his retirement to meet a powerful confederate army which had invaded Bulgaria under Ladislaus, King of Hungary, and the famous Hungarian hero John Huniades. In its first expedition this force won two important victories, and returned with honorable trophies, many prisoners, and abundant spoil. Following this success, there came an embassy from the Turkish Government soliciting peace, and offering terms most honorable and advantageous to the Christians. Upon these terms a truce for ten years was concluded and solemnly sworn to; by the Turks on the Koran, by the Christians on the New Testament. But the cardinal legate of the Pope had been present at this conference, and through the whole proceeding had maintained a sullen silence; and no sooner had the treaty been concluded and sworn to than tidings came that the Venetian and Genoese squadrons had occupied the Sea of Marmora, that the Greek Emperor had invaded Thrace, and that the allies were impatiently looking for the victorious Hungarians. Upon the receipt of this intelligence the legate declared the Christians absolved from their oaths, and vehemently urged them

to march to Constantinople, and seize this golden opportunity to drive the Turks finally from Europe. The generals yielded, and set forth upon their march. But at Varna, upon the shores of the Black Sea, they were astonished and dismayed by meeting the full array of the Turkish Empire with Amurath in person at its head. Amurath advanced with the violated treaty displayed before him, and calling upon God to appear for the vindication of the truth and the punishment of his perjured foes. The issue might well have convinced him that his prayer had been heard. The battle was obstinate and bloody: ten thousand Christians and a greater number of Moslems were slain; but the Christians were utterly defeated, Ladislaus was left dead upon the field, and Huniades with a small force of cavalry with difficulty escaped. The magnanimous Sultan reared a pillar over the grave of his royal foe, inscribing upon it only the record of his valor and his untimely fate. The battle of Varna was the most disastrous to the Christian arms since the fatal field of Kossova. It paralyzed for the time all opposition to Turkish aggression on the part of the western nations, and left Servia and Bosnia to fall a few years later, an easy prey, into the hands of Mohammed II. After this victory Amurath returned to his cloister, to be again recalled to the helm of state by a revolt of the Janizaries, and the confusion of the capital. After this second return to power he remained upon the throne until his death in 1451.

The arms of Amurath II. were victorious both in the West and the East; yet in the great enterprise of his life he failed. The one grand object now before the minds of the Turkish leaders was to extinguish the Greek Empire, and seat themselves upon the throne of the Cæsars. Accordingly, in 1422, Amurath laid siege to Constantinople with an army of two hundred thousand men. But the hour of doom for the ancient dominion of Rome had not yet come; and, after an ineffectual siege of two months, Amurath was compelled to retire. It was the last escape of Constantinople.

Mohammed II., the son and successor of Amurath, ascended the Ottoman throne in 1451. At first he received the Greek ambassadors with fair and friendly words, and formed with them a solemn treaty of amity, almost of alliance. Yet, from the beginning, it was his determined purpose, and the object of his highest ambition, to capture the imperial city, and destroy the last remains of the ancient Empire of Rome. In this enterprise he was destined to succeed; and this success has given him a proud preeminence in the long line of Turkish sovereigns, which he did not deserve. He was but another Bajazet, able and energetic, and holding the reins of government with an iron will, yet in personal character a fierce, brutal, licentious savage, without honesty, virtue, or greatness of soul. His natural gifts had been diligently improved by education. He was said to speak six languages, and displayed some taste in the fine

arts. He was fairly versed in geography and history, and in the siege of Constantinople proved himself not without skill as a military engineer. Yet, but for the one grand achievement which has immortalized his name, it may be doubted whether each and all of his five predecessors would not have been accounted greater as well as better men than he.

He took the first step towards the accomplishment of his great design, in the first year of his reign, by building a strong fortress on the European side of the Bosphorus, but five miles from Constantinople. This fortification complete, he began at once his vast preparations for the siege of the city. An army of two hundred and fifty thousand men was collected; every engine commonly used in those times for attacks upon strong fortifications was provided in great numbers and of superior quality; and to these was added another and more tremendous agency, and one which was destined to decide the day. Gunpowder had now been invented; and, by the aid of European engineers, Mohammed began to cast a number of enormous cannon, the rivals in size, if not in efficiency, of the heaviest guns of modern times.[1] The siege was long, arduous, and doubtful, and might have failed at last, but for a bold undertaking conceived by Mohammed, and carried out in a single night. Planks smeared with tallow were laid over land to the Bos-

[1] Some of these huge old cannon may, I think, still be seen upon the banks of the Dardanelles. One of them, a hundred years ago, carried a *stone* ball weighing seven hundred pounds. — See *Senior's Journal*, p. 181.

phorus, a distance of six miles; and upon these fourteen galleys were drawn by horses and men, and successfully launched upon the upper waters of the Golden Horn, far above the reach of the heavy Greek vessels below. The double attack thus organized proved decisive. The enfeebled garrison could no longer hold their ground; and on the 29th of May, 1453, after a siege of forty days, the wall was penetrated; the Turks streamed into the city, and Constantinople was won. The city was plundered and depopulated, great numbers of the people who had escaped the sword being sold as slaves. Very soon, however, the damages inflicted in the siege were repaired; and the city was made the capital of the Ottoman Empire. The survivors of the old population were invited to return; and great numbers of people were brought from Asia to fill the depopulated streets. As compared with the bloody scenes with which we have become but too familiar in the march of barbarian conquerors, the fate of Constantinople was mild and tolerable. The people returned in crowds as soon as they were assured of life and safety; the churches were divided equally between the two religions; the people were summoned to the election of a Patriarch with all the solemnity of the ancient forms; and the Patriarch, when duly chosen, received the crosier from the hands of Mohammed himself, and was led in state to a palace set apart for his use. This precedent was followed by the Sultans in the inauguration of the Greek Patriarchs, without any change, until 1821.[1]

[1] Upham's History of the Ottoman Empire, chap. viii.

By the arms of Mohammed II. the Turkish conquests in Europe were carried nearly to their final limit. Wallachia, Servia (excepting the city and fortress of Belgrade), Bosnia, Dalmatia, the Morea, and the larger Greek Islands, all bowed to his yoke. The Servians and Bosnians, indeed, yielded but too readily to his power, seduced by specious promises, and prefering civil servitude with their Greek brethren to ecclesiastical bondage to the Pope, the only price at which succor from the West could have been obtained. After thirteen years of stubborn and heroic warfare, the famous Albanian or Epirot hero, Scanderbeg, was at last overcome, and died in exile among the Venetians.[1] A little before Mohammed's death, his armies invaded Southern Italy, and captured Otranto. The whole peninsula trembled upon the brink of ruin, when a great defeat, inflicted by the Karamanians and Mamalukes upon his son Bajazet in Asia, compelled the Sultan to recall his forces. Otranto was recovered, and Italy relieved from its mortal fear. The military career of Mohammed II. was very far from being uniformly successful. Through all his reign the honor of the Christian arms was well maintained by Scanderbeg, by John Huniades, Governor of Hungary, and by the Knights of St. John, who held the Island of Rhodes. For thirteen years Scanderbeg maintained himself among the mountains of Albania,

[1] For the fascinating romance of the life and exploits of Scanderbeg, which long passed for history, see the voluminous Turkish History of Knolles, folio edition, vol. i. pp. 248–275. The work of Knolles was published in 1610.

inflicting a long succession of crushing defeats upon the ablest generals of the Turkish army. But the great reverse which effectually checked the westward progress of the Turks in this generation was the terrible defeat of Mohammed by John Huniades before the walls of Belgrade, in 1456. Belgrade, the present capital of the principality of Servia, lying upon the south bank of the Danube, at the point where that great river receives the waters of the Save, was at that time a fortress of great strength; and its defence against the Turks was justly considered by the Christian powers a matter of vital importance. Mohammed ascended the Danube from Widin with an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men, a fleet of two hundred galleys, and a train of the same enormous ordnance which had proved so effective against the walls of Constantinople. The defeat of this tremendous armament was the last and most glorious exploit of Huniades. He broke through and destroyed the fleet, boldly attacked the land force in the open field, and compelled the Sultan to steal away in the night with the loss of forty thousand men. The Island of Rhodes, a large and beautiful island lying off the south-west corner of Asia Minor, was held at that time, as it had been for one hundred and seventy years, by the Knights of St. John.[1] These knights were an order of soldier monks, formed at Jerusalem in the time of the crusades, for the defence of the Christian

[1] Called also the Knights Hospitallers, because their first duty had been the maintenance of a hospital at Jerusalem for the relief of pilgrims.

faith against the infidels ; and for three hundred and fifty years they fulfilled this mission with an heroic constancy and indomitable valor which have never been surpassed. At the final expulsion of the Franks from the Holy Land in 1201, the Knights of St. John retired to Cyprus. Here they remained until about the year 1310, when they received the Island of Rhodes from the Greek Emperor Andronicus II. After the fall of Constantinople, the Hospitallers bravely held their ground for seventy years, the advanced outpost of Christendom in the midst of Moslem foes. In the year 1480 Mohammed sent against Rhodes an army of a hundred thousand men ; but with such skill and valor did the knights conduct their defence, that after a siege of three months, and the loss of a great part of their force, the Turks were forced to an ignominious retreat. Mohammed II. died in 1481, while on his march into Asia to retrieve the disasters sustained by the arms of his son, and was succeeded by his son Bajazet (Byazid) II.

Bajazet II. was a quiet, religious, unwarlike prince ; and, during his reign of thirty years, Moldavia was the only important acquisition of the Turkish arms. He was deposed and poisoned by his son Selim, in 1512.

Selim I. proved himself at once the most cruel and unscrupulous tyrant, and the ablest and most warlike Sultan, who had ever filled the Ottoman throne. After putting his father to death, his first care was to secure his throne by exterminating the whole imperial race excepting himself and his children. In 1514 he

invaded Persia, defeated the Persians in a fierce and desperate battle in which he suffered immense loss, and added Armenia to his Empire. In 1516 he advanced for a death-grapple with the terrible power of the Mamalukes. In two tremendous battles fought the same year, the first near Aleppo in Northern Syria, the second at Mataria, near Cairo in Egypt, the Mamaluke power was annihilated. Cansou, the last Mamaluke King of Syria and Egypt, lost his life at Aleppo; and Syria, Egypt, and Arabia at once submitted to the conqueror. In Egypt Selim found the lineal successor of the Caliphs of Bagdad, who had been maintained in quiet dignity by the Mamaluke Kings, and was still looked up to with something of the reverence due to the spiritual head of the Moslem world. This phantom of departed greatness he conveyed to Constantinople, and treated him with great respect and reverence until his death, when his spiritual prerogatives were merged in the Ottoman crown, giving it a new hold upon the reverence and obedience of the Mohammedan world. The great abilities of Selim were not manifested in his military operations alone. He was skilled in Turkish, Persian, and Arabic literature, wrote poetry not without merit, patronized arts and letters, and displayed in every department of his administration remarkable sagacity and penetration. In nothing else were his ability and good judgment more conspicuously displayed, than in building the great naval arsenal at Pera, — an establishment which in the reign of his son made the

power of the Empire hardly less formidable upon the sea than upon the land. Selim I. died in 1519, after a reign of nine years, and was succeeded by his son Solyman I., the greatest of his race, and known to the Christian world as the Magnificent.

CHAPTER XI.

SOLYMAN THE MAGNIFICENT.

IN the long, prosperous, and brilliant reign of Solyman the Magnificent, from 1519 to 1566, the Turkish Empire reached its culminating point, its highest pitch of grandeur and power. This illustrious monarch, who lived in an age of great events and great men, the contemporary of Charles V. of Germany, Francis I. of France, and Henry VIII. of England, was, both by land and sea, the mightiest potentate of his time. No other sovereign of that age had command of a military force so thoroughly disciplined, or so efficient and irresistible, as his. "At the time when Solyman began his reign, the Janizaries had been embodied near a century and a half; and, during that long period, the severity of their military discipline had in no degree been relaxed. The other soldiers, drawn from the provinces of the Empire, had been kept almost continually under arms. . . . Against troops thus trained and accustomed to service, the forces of the Christian powers took the field with great disadvantage. The most intelligent as well as impartial authors of the sixteenth century acknowledge

and lament the superior attainments of the Turks in the military art." [1]

The civil and financial administration of Solyman was as much superior to that of the Western powers as that of his army. His limited income was husbanded with the greatest prudence; and, with all his wars, his subjects were never overburdened with taxation. The great pashas were held in strict subordination and obedience; and Christian travellers were struck with the good order and prosperity which generally prevailed. As it respects the Christian subjects of the Sultan, it is not probable that any great regard was had for their rights, except so far as they were guarded by some positive treaty or charter. They were but *ghiaours*, or infidels, who owed their very lives to the forbearance of the faithful, and must have been exposed to great and frequent oppressions. But all in authority knew well that their contented industry was one of the chief corner-stones of the national prosperity; and as a general thing they appear to have been protected in person and property, and to have lived in comparative quiet and comfort. Turkish civilization, such as it was, was then at its highest point, in its most flourishing condition. "Under his rule," observes Mr. Upham, "the character of the Court became changed from the stern and secret abode of the *Hankiar*, or manslayer, to the palace of a magnificent and enlightened prince, assimilated in its character to the cultivated habits and patronizing

[1] Robertson's Charles V. (Frost's edition), p. 88.

bounty of the Court of Bagdad, under the Caliph Haroun, who lives in the enchanting tales of Arabia. It is a truly refreshing relief from the usual blood-stained annals of the Ottoman princes, to consider the great actions, and still greater designs, of one of their race who filled the throne for nearly half a century, with such distinguished lustre.[1]

But, splendid as the internal administration of Soly-man proved, he saw at once that the order and pros-perity of his Empire could only be preserved by keeping his fierce soldiery in constant activity. His long reign was therefore a constant succession of great military enterprises, most of which were headed by the Sultan in person. His first exploit was the capture of Belgrade. The great Mathias Corvinus, the patron of arts and letters, who had reigned over Hungary, Bohemia, Transylvania, Wallachia, and Bosnia, was now dead; and under his feeble success-ors his kingdom lay an easy and tempting prey to the Turks. Solyman laid siege to Belgrade in the summer of 1521. The genius and valor of Huniades no longer defended the walls; and, in less than a month, this most important fortress was won. The next year he turned his arms against the Island of Rhodes. An army of one hundred and fifty thousand men, under the command of Mustapha Pasha, conveyed by a fleet of four hundred vessels, was despatched for the conquest of this last stronghold of Christendom in the East. To meet this tremendous force, Philip

[1] History of the Ottoman Empire, chap. xi.

Villiers de L'Isle Adam, the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John, counting every man upon the island capable of bearing arms, had a force of no more than six or seven thousand men. But the fortifications were strong and well furnished; and the little garrison was as brave and devoted a band as ever followed the banner of the cross. On the 26th of June the huge Turkish fleet was descried;[1] and the siege, immediately formed, was pressed with fanatical valor by the Turks, and with all the skill and resources known to the military art of that age. But the Knights by frequent sallies ruined their works, and cut to pieces their defenders. The repeated and desperate assaults of the Turks were repulsed with awful carnage, until complete discouragement seized upon the besieging force, and neither prayers nor threats could move them to renew the attack. In this emergency Mustapha besought the Sultan to appear in person in the camp. Solyman instantly set out, and reached the island on the 24th of August. The presence of the Sultan raised the spirit and courage of his army again to the highest pitch. The Janizaries performed prodigies of valor; and the 24th of September was fixed for a general assault. With fiercest courage the great host rushed to surmount the broken, crumbling walls. But the desperate resolution of the garrison could not be overcome; the Turks were everywhere hurled back; and, after suffering immense losses, they retired discomfited to their

[1] Knolles, folio edition, vol. i. p. 390.

lines. The Turks now despaired of taking the city by assault, and fell back upon the slower but surer methods of mining and battering down the walls. Long and bravely the garrison held out; but at length, when their walls had been reduced to heaps of rubbish, and the last hope was cut off, they submitted to honorable terms of surrender. These terms Soliman fairly, chivalrously kept. In spite of the tremendous losses he had sustained, and the indignant murmurs of the Janizaries, he allowed the Knights and four thousand people of the island to sail away in safety, with all that they possessed. It was not until Christmas Day that the Sultan entered the conquered city.[1]

Solyman now paused in his career of conquest, to regulate the internal affairs of his Empire. "The finances and the administration of justice were established on bases of order and equality; and the domestic, national, and military regulations were so judiciously adapted to the Turkish character that they have remained the permanent constitutions of the Ottoman Empire to the present day." [2]

About this time, grown restless with two years of peace, and burning with resentment at the loss of the plunder of Rhodes, the Janizaries began to display an arrogant, mutinous spirit. The disturbance was speedily quelled; but Solyman determined to curb

[1] An excellent account of the Knights of St. John, from this time until the expulsion of the Order from Malta by the French in 1798, may be found in Seddall's "Malta, Past and Present."

[2] Upham's Ottoman Empire, chap. xi.

their dangerous power, and lessen his dependence upon them, by forming another military body, which should be more entirely devoted to his person. The grounds and fortifications of the seraglio were gradually filled with *Bostangis*, or gardeners. But these Gardeners were drawn from the best soldiers in the Empire, and ere long formed a new and powerful guard.

In 1526 Solyman gathered his forces for the invasion of Hungary. In the fatal battle of Mohatz, the feeble forces of the helpless, distracted kingdom were nearly annihilated; and for one hundred and fifty-seven years, until the great defeat and final expulsion of the Turks by John Sobieski in 1683, Hungary, broken and prostrate, lay more or less completely subject to Turkish power.

In 1529 Solyman again entered Hungary upon the most momentous and most disastrous campaign of his life. Two hundred thousand men, destined for the conquest of Vienna, were reviewed under the walls of Belgrade. A flotilla of four hundred boats moved up the Danube, conveying a powerful train of heavy ordnance, which, happily for the Germans, never reached its destination, having been either sunk, or left behind in Hungary. On the 27th of September, the investment of the city was complete.[1] Thirty thousand tents covered the adjacent country; and three hundred pieces of lighter artillery were in position before the walls. The German States had been

[1] Murray's "Sieges of Vienna," pp. 24–45.

strangely apathetic, their feeble succors hardly arriving in time to take part in the defence. The whole force which Ferdinand was able to muster, to meet this overwhelming invasion, amounted to no more than twenty-four thousand men. But this little army stood manfully at its post. The light artillery of the Turks made little impression upon the walls: their repeated efforts to storm the works met with no success. The whole army was becoming disheartened, and the snows of winter were beginning to fall. Under these circumstances a general assault was ordered for the 14th of October. It failed disastrously; and Solyman was obliged to give the order for retreat. The only result of the campaign was the utter wasting of the country through which the Sultan had passed, and an immense loss to his own forces. In 1531 Solyman determined to avenge his tarnished honor, and again entered Hungary with a vast army said to have numbered four hundred thousand men. But on this occasion the Germans were fully aroused. Charles V. himself took the field at the head of two hundred and fifty thousand men. Solyman shrank from a conflict with such a force, and again ignominiously retired, dragging with him thirty thousand miserable captives to be sold for slaves.

The next point to be noticed in the career of Solyman is the founding of his stupendous maritime power. Up to this time the Turks had never been strong upon the sea. The Venetians, and the Knights of St. John now firmly re-established at

Malta, were more than a match for them. But now the famous Barbarossa appears upon the scene. Barbarossa's proper name was Hayradin. Hayruduc and Hayradin were corsairs, or pirates, from the Island of Mitylene. Having gathered about them a considerable naval force, they were called to the assistance of Selim, King of Algiers. They entered Algiers only to put Selim to death, and usurp his throne. Hayruduc soon fell; and Hayradin, or Barbarossa, remained King of Algiers, and the terror of the Mediterranean. Here was just the man for the Turks. Solyman summoned the great corsair to his service, and made a bargain with him, by which not Algiers alone, but all the North of Africa, was to be made tributary to the Sultan; while Barbarossa became Capitan Pasha or High Admiral of the Empire, ranking as the third chief officer of the government, having absolute command of the seas, and of all the islands and naval forces of the Empire. The arsenal of Selim supplied the new Admiral with ships. Tunis was conquered; the rich islands of the Cyclades were wrested from Venice; and for many years Barbarossa sailed the waters of the Mediterranean and Ægean in irresistible power. Nor were the Turkish naval operations limited to these domestic seas. Under the direction of Barbarossa, a powerful fleet fitted out in the ports of the Red Sea was sent into the Indian Ocean to attack the Portuguese establishments at Goa. For some reason this expedition failed of its end, and only displayed the power and far-reaching schemes of the great Sultan.

In 1534 Solyman invaded Persia. As against the main army of the Persians, his operations were unsuccessful; but turning southward he took Bagdad, and added the vast regions of Mesopotamia to his Empire.

The greatness of Solyman brought him no exemption from the domestic sorrows and tragedies which seem inseparable from the state of an Oriental despot. His tender and romantic affection for his beautiful and best beloved wife Roxalana ended only with her life. But Mustapha, his favorite and noblest son, was the child of another mother. Roxalana was determined that the crown should descend to her own sons. Her intrigues and those of her party so excited the suspicion, and at length the anger, of the Sultan against Mustapha, that the unhappy prince was strangled in his father's presence. Two other of his sons came to a no less tragic end; and Selim, the second son of Roxalana, alone remained.

After these sad events, Solyman devoted himself for a time to the internal affairs of his Empire. He completed the magnificent mosque called after him the Sulimanyeh, and, after the death of Roxalana, erected near it a noble mausoleum to her memory. It was at this time also that he reared the most honorable monument to his own memory by recasting with equal justice and wisdom the whole system of Moslem jurisprudence. The loose unwritten rescripts of the Sultans were reduced to a written code, which, with the Koran and traditions, remains to this day the fundamental law of the Empire.

In the year 1565, Solyman sent out his second great expedition against the Knights of St. John, now strongly established at Malta, and again the terror of the Turkish mercantile marine. On the 18th of May the Turkish fleet of one hundred and thirty-eight ships of war, bearing an army of thirty thousand men, appeared off the island. The defence of Malta by the Grand Master John de la Vallette, and his little army of eight or nine thousand men, has been the wonder of all succeeding times.[1] The heroic Knights equalled and surpassed the great deeds of their Order at Rhodes. The Turks directed their first attack against the little outlying fort of St. Elmo, garrisoned by two or three hundred men. Before this insignificant post their whole force was engaged for a month; and not until every man of the garrison had fallen, and eight thousand Turks had been slain, did they get possession of the fort. The defence of the main fortifications was maintained with the same spirit, and the same frightful carnage in the ranks of the Turks, until the 8th of September, when the Sicilian fleet appeared with a re-enforcement of sixteen thousand men, and the Turks precipitately fled.

The last expedition of Solyman was provoked by the growing power of the House of Austria, and the threatening attitude of the Emperor Maximilian. Although seventy-six years of age, the stout old Sultan scorned to yield to the infirmities of advancing years, and marched as usual at the head of his army.

[1] Seddall's Malta Past and Present, chap. v.

In 1566 he entered Hungary with two hundred thousand men, and laid siege to Zigith. This was a small fortress, but very difficult of access, being situated in the midst of a marsh, and defended by a garrison of most determined bravery. Every effort to take the place was repulsed with terrible slaughter, until the Sultan, enraged by this frustration of his plans, commanded a general assault, threatening to throw the heads of his generals into the ditch if they did not take the place. This assault was made upon the 29th of August, and completely failed. At this new disaster Solyman was so overcome by disappointment and chagrin, that he was seized with a fit of apoplexy of which he died.

Thus ended the long and brilliant career of the greatest sovereign and the greatest man ever produced by the Turkish race. With his death the sun of the Ottoman power passed its meridian, and began its rapid decline. At this point, therefore, we may appropriately pause for a brief survey of the polity and organization of the Empire, its various institutions, and the general character of its civilization.[1]

[1] For a full and admirable account of the organization and characteristics of the Ottoman Empire under the early Sultans, see Finlay's History of Greece under Ottoman and Venetian Domination, chap. i.

A very interesting and valuable account of the organization, resources, and condition of the Turkish Empire in the latter half of the seventeenth century, may be found in a treatise entitled "The Present State of the Ottoman Empire," by Sir Paul Rycaut, appended to the second volume of Knolles's Turkish History, folio edition, printed in London in 1687. Sir Paul Rycaut was for eighteen years a resident in the Empire, for five years in Constantinople, in important official positions. From his statements it is

The government of the Empire was a despotism of the most absolute character. The Sultan was not only obeyed, but revered as the successor of the Prophet, and the vicegerent of God. Law or custom fixed a nominal limit to the number of men whom the Sultan might put to death in a single day; but this limit was often overpassed without scandal or offence. He was held to be bound by the law, that is, by the Koran and the body of Moslem tradition:[1] and some have maintained that the Sheikh ul Islam, or Grand Mufti, the authoritative expounder of the law, had the power of veto against any illegal act of the Sultan. It is obvious, however, that the judgment of the Grand Mufti, who held his office at the pleasure of the Sultan, and had no force to sustain his authority, could have had only the moral weight which in such a state of society must always belong to a body like the Turkish Ulima, or hierarchy of ecclesiastical lawyers. Among a people in whom the religious principle is as strong as it then was among the Turks, the influence of such a body must be very great. But an energetic Sultan like Bajazet I. or Solyman the Magnificent, with two hundred thousand soldiers at his back,

clear, that even at the time of his residence in the Empire, through the decline of the ancient discipline, and the oppression of the pashas, its prosperity had already greatly declined.

[1] These traditions embody the reputed sayings of the Prophet and his immediate successors, and in the eyes of all Moslems are hardly less binding than the Koran itself. See an able and learned article on "The Science of Moslem Tradition," by Prof. Salisbury, in the Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. vii.

would find his power little affected by its decisions. In fact, the power of the Ulima, like every other power in Turkey excepting that of the Sultan, has always been exerted more by intrigue and bribery than in any other way.[1]

The idea of a nobility, or of any distinction of classes, in the Mohammedan population of the Empire, was something wholly foreign to the Turkish mind. In the view of the people and of the law, one true believer was as good as another. The deposed pasha sank to the level of the common people, while a manumitted slave might be raised at once to the highest office and honor. All dignities belonged not to the man, but to the place; and all places were at the absolute disposal of the Sultan. The bow-string often ended a pasha's life; and his wealth went at once to the imperial treasury. The will of an able and energetic Sultan was rarely resisted by any official, however high or powerful, unless circumstances enabled him to defy the imperial authority. If a eunuch or other messenger appeared with the bow-string and the imperial mandate, in the presence even of the highest pasha or general of the Empire, he usually submitted quietly, and without a word, to

[1] See Robertson's Charles V., note 43, upon the "View of the State of Europe:" "Though the Mufti is many times for custom, formality, and the satisfaction of the People, consulted with, yet, when his Sentences have not been agreeable to the Designs intended, I have known him, in an instant, thrown from his Office to make room for another Oracle better prepared for the purpose of his Master."—Sir Paul Rycaut's *Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 3.

the inevitable decree of fate. This was true, however, only of these officials who had received their places by the Sultan's gift, and were wholly subject to his authority. As we shall presently see, there were many provinces in the Empire which were the hereditary domains of princely families, and governed by chiefs who within their own territories were almost independent of the Sultan.

The organization of the Empire was essentially military, its territories being parcelled out into fiefs which were held in theory, and to a considerable extent in practice, at the pleasure of the Sultan. These fiefs, or provinces, were committed to pashas of two grades, called respectively pashas of two and three tails.[1] A pasha of two tails was the master of a single fief, or province ; while a pasha of three tails was called a vizier, and had jurisdiction over two or more provinces each with its subordinate pasha. Although the pashalics were in theory held at the pleasure of the Sultan, this was a rule to which there were many and ever-multiplying exceptions. Many noble families had retained their possessions and their power by the terms of surrender at the conquest of the country. The Christian nobles of Bosnia turned Mohammedans retained their estates, and became Turkish pashas. The nobles of Herzegovina, the province lying west of Bosnia, were yet more fortunate. The first and only example of the kind in Turkish history, they were strong enough in the support of an armed popu-

[1] That is, horse-tails, the badges of their authority.

lace, to retain both their estates and their religion. As time wore on, more and more of the great pashas succeeded in making their offices and their estates hereditary in their families. In such cases, upon the death or disgrace of a pasha, some other member of the same family received investiture as a matter of course. A considerable number of these hereditary chiefs, like those of the Albanians, Druzes, and Kûrds, were little else within their own territories than independent sovereigns, owning a nominal allegiance to the Sultan, and paying a small and definite tribute.

There was another class of local hereditary chiefs in various parts of the Empire, but more especially in Asia Minor, called Deré-beys, or lords of the valley. These men constituted a powerful provincial nobility, and were a chief corner-stone in the strength of the state. The universal and complete destruction of this ancient order under Sultan Mahmoud's system of reform has done more, perhaps, than any thing else, to ruin the prosperity of the provinces, and sap the very foundations of the imperial government. Some of these men were originally nothing else than lawless freebooters, who, fixing an impregnable stronghold in some convenient location, either defied the government, or secured its connivance, made themselves masters of the surrounding country, and levied black-mail on all passers-by. Most of them, however, would seem to have had a more honorable origin, and to have held their estates and their authority by a

tenure older than the Empire itself.[1] "The Deré-beys . . . were the original possessors of those parts of Asia Minor which submitted, under feudal conditions, to the Ottomans. . . . Mohammed II. bound their submission, and finally settled the terms of their existence. He confirmed them in their lands, subject, however, to tribute, and to quotas of troops in war; and he absolved the head of each family forever from personal service. The last clause was the most important, as thereby the Sultans had no power over their lives, nor, consequently, could be their heirs. . . The families of the Deré-beys, therefore, became neither impoverished nor extinct. . . . The districts of these noblemen . . . were oases in the desert. Their owners had more than a life-interest in the soil: they were born and lived among the people, and, being hereditarily rich, had no occasion to create a private fortune. . . . The devotion of the dependents of the Deré-beys was great: . . . hence the facility with which the Sultans, up to the present century, drew such large bodies of cavalry into the field. The Deré-beys have always furnished and maintained the greatest part; and there

[1] "The right of hereditary succession was respected in many districts, when the great Seljûk nobles and Turkoman chiefs had voluntarily submitted to the Othoman government; and several of these great chieftains at the commencement of the present century could still boast of a princely authority which dated from an older period than the dynasty of Othman. . . . The late Sultan Mahmoud II. swept away the last traces of the Seljûk feudal system by exterminating the Deré-beys, the ruins of whose castles still greet the traveller in many of the most sequestered and picturesque valleys of the Asiatic provinces." — FINLAY'S *Greece under Othoman and Venetian Domination*, pp. 51, 18.

is not one instance, since the conquest of Constantinople, of one of these great families raising the standard of revolt."[1] These Deré-beys were the feudal barons of Asia Minor. Their castles were the centres of industry and social life in their several districts.

The military force of the Empire consisted of two distinct and widely dissimilar organizations. First, there were the formidable and famous Janizaries, which for three hundred years were the bulwark of the Turkish throne, forming a regular army of thirty or forty thousand men, and recruited wholly from Christian boys. These boys were trained through a succession of schools, and under the strictest discipline, in the Mohammedan faith, and to the highest military skill. It is very remarkable that the Sultans, from the first establishment of their Empire, should have rested their power, not upon the Moslem races of Asia, but upon the Christian peoples of their European provinces. Every fifth youth among the Christian captives was set apart for the service of the Sultan, and trained to the highest proficiency in military exercises; while the more promising were set apart for a higher training, to fit them for the civil service and for military command.[2] The Sultan thus obtained not only a standing army by far the best and most efficient then existing, but a body of most thoroughly trained and able servants without family or friends, and dependent upon the government alone for employ-

[1] Slade's Travels in Turkey, vol. i. p. 116.

[2] Rycaut's Present State of the Ottoman Empire, Book I., chaps. v., vi.

ment, honor, and power. "The arm of Europe was thus turned upon herself; and the Western nations must have contended with troops of hereditary robustness and intrepidity, whose emulous enthusiasm for the country that had adopted them was controlled by habitual obedience to their commanders." [1] When the supply from captives failed, an inhuman tax of every fifth male child was levied upon the Christian inhabitants of the European provinces; and thus the ranks of the Janizaries were always kept full. Besides the Janizaries, there were various other though less important bodies of regular troops, consisting mostly of mercenaries hired from the various provinces.

The other branch of the Turkish military service was the grand national force of irregular cavalry, consisting of the pashas at the head of the spahis, or men-at-arms of their several provinces, and forming a body of mounted troops as fiery and effective, perhaps, as any sovereign has ever led to the field. This mounted force, always available at a moment's notice, formed an army of about two hundred thousand men. The method by which this vast body of irregular cavalry was raised and supported gives us a clear insight into the fundamental character of the Turkish Government. That government is, and must remain while it exists at all, the government of a dominant race, toiled for and supported by an inferior caste. The whole Empire was sprinkled over with little feudal holdings of three hundred acres and upwards, with

[1] Hallam's Middle Ages, p. 260.

the Christian population upon them, which were committed, at first by a life tenure, to *spahis*. These spahis were not feudal lords. They had no jurisdiction of any kind over their spahilics : they were simply cavaliers or men-at-arms, supported by their holdings, and bound to be always in readiness to follow the Sultan to the field, furnishing an additional horseman for every three hundred aspers — about thirty-three dollars — of their income.[1] These horsemen marched under the banner of their district, which was called a *sandjak*. This name of the banner was transferred to the district ; and each district furnishing four hundred horsemen was called a sandjak.

The discipline of the Turkish armies, in the better days of the Empire, was in some respects very loose and barbaric, while in others it was exceedingly strict and severe. Of the formal ranks, the machine-like movements, the manœuvres, evolutions, and tactics, of a modern regular army, the Turks knew very little. The Janizaries and spahis moved and fought on the field of battle confusedly, and with little attempt at military order. Consequently, if their first fierce onset was successfully withstood, they were very

[1] Creasy's History of the Ottoman Turks, vol. i. p. 165. See also Ranke's History of Servia, pp. 28–33. Spahi is a word of Persian origin, and is akin to *sipahee*, or *sepoy*, the name given to the native soldiers of the British Government in India. The later writers usually call these hereditary men-at-arms of the Turkish cavalry, spahis ; their original and proper designation, however, is *timariots*, from *timar*, a sabre. According to Sir Paul Rycaut, the spahis, still existing in his day as a distinct force, were an older and more irregular soldiery, paid directly from the public treasury. — *Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, Book III., chap. vi.

likely to fail. A slight repulse would often throw them into panic, confusion, and flight. On the other hand, no Roman army ever surpassed the severe and inexorable order of their camps. While passing through a friendly territory, all license, disorder, and marauding were most sternly suppressed.

In the year 1665 Sir Paul Rycaut was sent by the English Ambassador at Constantinople to meet the Turkish army then returning from a disastrous campaign in Hungary. He went to Belgrade, met the army there, was with it for twenty days, and for thirteen days marched with it upon its homeward course. He thus had an opportunity, perhaps never before enjoyed by an intelligent Englishman, of studying the organization and character of a Turkish army in the field. From the exceedingly interesting and valuable chapter in which his observations are recorded, the following passages, describing the order and discipline of the Turkish camp, may be cited. In front were the Janizaries, with the tent of their Agha, or general, in the midst. In the centre were the lofty and magnificent pavilions, more like palaces than tents, of the vizier and his chief officers. Near these was the army treasury, in little chests piled one upon another, always carefully guarded. On the right were the artillery and ammunition, and in the rear the spahis and camp followers. In the centre of the camp there was also a large canopy, under which councils were held, and offenders tried and punished. Having mentioned these points, the writer thus pro-

ceeds: "The Conquests they have made on the parts of Christendom is a demonstration undeniable of some super-eminent Order in their Army, which recompenses the defect of Knowledge in the Mystery of War. And this Regulation (in my opinion) proceeds from nothing more than the strict prohibition of Wine upon pain of death (two Men being executed during the time of my Residence there for bringing a small quantity of it in the Field), for hereby men become sober, diligent, watchful, and obedient. . . . And so sensible are the Turks of the abuses and disorders which arise in their Camp by the use of Wine, that they endeavor all that is possible to debar their people from it; and therefore, two or three days before the Army arrives at any place, Officers are despatched before to seal all Taverns, and make proclamation against the sale of Wine. . . . In the Turkish Camp no brawls, quarrels, nor clamors are heard; no abuses are committed on the people by the march of their Army; all is bought and paid with money, as by Travellers that are Guests at an Inn; there are no complaints by Mothers of the Rape of their Virgin-daughters, no Violences, or Robberies offered on the Inhabitants: all which order tends to the success of their Armies, and the Enlargement of their Empire.

"The Camp is always free from ordure and filth; there being holes digged near every Tent, which are encompassed about with Canvas for the more privacy and accommodation; so that the whole Camp is clear of all excrements of men, as also kept more free from

other stench (which may cause putrefaction) than the most orderly Cities in the world."[1]

The polity of the Empire was very simple, but, in the hands of the able and energetic Sultans of the first three centuries, very effective. Government was almost wholly local and municipal. The towns and cities provided for their own wants, and, to a considerable extent, regulated their own affairs. The pashas managed their own provinces; and as long as they paid the regular tribute, responded promptly to the Sultan's calls for military service, administered the law, and were not guilty of too scandalous oppression or maladministration, they were left to exercise a sovereign authority within their own territories. The hereditary pashas were in reality so many petty kings; and, having a permanent interest in their governments, they very often devoted themselves with great energy and much wisdom to develop their resources, and promote the general prosperity. Two hundred years ago the Empire was full of important and costly public works, — now to be seen only in their ruins, — which had been undertaken and carried out by the local pashas. With such a system, kept in harmony and good working-order by the powerful hand of an able master, the task of the general government was comparatively simple and easy. The great national military force was always in readiness, and supported itself; the revenue, though limited, was fixed and secure; there was no debt, and usually

[1] Present State of the Ottoman Empire, p. 98.

no lack of money. It is obvious, however, that the successful working of such a system must depend entirely upon the ability, energy, and wisdom of the single man at its head; and it is one of the most remarkable facts of history, that the obscure family of the Turkish Othman should have produced a succession of able and energetic princes, who proved fully competent to wield for three hundred years the tremendous engine of Turkish power, and to make their country, through all that long period, the most powerful, and one of the most prosperous, of the nations of the earth. This fact is partly accounted for by the education of these princes, who were trained from early youth to incessant activity both in the council and in the field; but it is evident, further, that they belonged to a race of wonderful vitality and vigor.

Allusion has already been made to the Grand Mufti, or head of the Ulima, the authoritative expounder of Moslem law. The Ulima, or the Chain of the Ulima, is the hierarchy of men learned in the law; the word *ulima* being simply the plural of *'alĭm*, a learned man. The early Sultans established all over the country *medressehs*, or colleges, in which the students went through a course of studies of considerable extent and value. The simple graduate of these *medressehs* might teach an ordinary school, but could rise no higher. He must afterwards go through a long and thorough training in Moslem law before he could command any of the higher positions, either

literary or civil. This higher training complete, he became at once a member of the Ulima. From this body were chosen all the professors, all the *mollahs*, or judges of cities, and all the *kadis*, or judges of towns.[1] An imam, or priest, is not necessarily a member of the Ulima. Any man acceptable to the people may become their imam, to lead their prayers or prostrations on Friday noon, and to preach the sermon if there is one. The preachers are often called sheikhs, which is simply a title of honor, meaning a leader. Every *leader* in Turkey, if only of the mule-drivers, is called a sheikh.

The Turkish language has never had an alphabet of its own. It has always been written either with the Arabic character, which is very poorly fitted to express its vocal sounds, or with the Armenian, which answers the purpose much better, but which the Turks have been inclined to despise as the alphabet of Christians and slaves. In the course of the three hundred years of Turkish prosperity, literature was diligently cultivated, and there were various schools of poetry, history, and theology. This literary activity, however, resulted in very little of any permanent value to mankind. The impress left upon the Turkish mind by Persian influences in the days of the Seljûk Sultans has governed its whole subse-

[1] The Ulima became in time a kind of hereditary legal peerage, exerting a steady, conservative, and powerful influence in the state. Their sanctity protected them from spoliation; and their wealth descended to their sons, who were trained to the same profession.— SLADE'S *Travels in Turkey*, vol. i. pp. 119–123. — CREASY'S *Ottoman Turks*, i., p. 334.

quent development. Turkish poetry, as those familiar with it assure us, is but a poor imitation of Persian standards ; and the works of Turkish historians are valuable only as informing us of the events of their own history. The best and ablest works of Turkish literature are said to be those of the ecclesiastical lawyers, or legal theologians. Some of these would seem to be of real merit and permanent value.

The highest achievements of Turkish civilization were in works of public utility. In this direction much was well and worthily done. It was, no doubt, a happy thing for the people of the Empire, that so large a part of the country came to be held in hereditary possession by great families. These families had a fixed and permanent interest in their provinces and their people ; and to promote their prosperity, was to increase their own wealth and power. Doubtless their rule was often tyrannical enough ; but from occasional oppression in one form or another there was unhappily, in such a state of society, no escape. But, under the government of these hereditary chiefs, the interests of the rulers and the ruled were in the main the same ; and the common people seem, upon the whole, to have enjoyed as large a measure of order, security, and prosperity as was possible under a system so arbitrary and so rude. The wholesome virtues of their faith, also, were constantly impelling the great men of the provinces to undertake costly and noble works of public charity. Mosques and colleges were built, the buildings being often large and

commodious, and substantially constructed of stone. Strong and excellent stone bridges were thrown across the rivers; and everywhere the great thoroughfares of the Empire were lined at short intervals with caravansaries, or khans, and with fountains of pure water, for the refreshment of the traveller.

These khans were a very important feature in the business and social system of the Empire. They were like great hotels, unfurnished and without a landlord. Many of them were costly and commodious structures, very strongly and substantially built, in which the company of travellers or of merchants might find comfortable and secure accommodations, providing for their own wants, with perhaps some partial supplies from the *khanjee*, or official in charge. The great thoroughfares of the Empire were the arteries of a vast and incessant current of travel and trade. There was the usual and necessary passing of single individuals and companies of people from town to town, and to and fro between the capital and the provinces; and there was the constant movement of the enormous traffic needed to supply the wants of a great and thriving population. But, besides all this domestic intercourse of trade and travel, there was a great system of foreign commerce by which, as of old, the products of the distant East passed through these countries to supply the wants of the nations of Northern Europe. From India through Bagdad and Damascus, and from China through Samarcand and Persia, these commercial routes centred at Constan-

tinople, and from thence passed on through Thrace and Bulgaria to Northern Europe. To all this vast system of social and commercial movements, these frequent and strongly built khans were of vital importance and value. They were, in fact, many of them, little commercial fortresses, in which any number of merchants with their costly wares might rest in peace and comfort, secure against invasion or nocturnal surprise. Recent travellers have given us a clear idea of these fine old khans as they were in their glory, and as they now are. They have shared in the ruin which has fallen upon every thing in the Empire; but from what still remains it is easy to see what they once were.[1] The remains of one at Khavsa in European Turkey, thirty or forty miles south-east from Adrianople, are thus described by Mr. MacFarlane: "On the other side of the street, the ruins of the great khan were very extensive, that which remained showing that the building must have been solid and in very good taste. . . . A range of lodging-rooms, nicely separated by stone walls, and each having its fireplace, now lies open to the street, the fronts having been knocked in. Behind this range, the khan expands into four spacious open courts, on the four sides of which there had once been admirable stables, and comfortable, even elegant lodging-rooms; but stables and rooms had almost entirely disappeared, little remaining but the strong enclosing walls. In

[1] For an excellent representation of the interior of an old Turkish caravansera, or khan, see Col. Chesney's Expedition to the Euphrates, vol. i. p. 368.

one of the courts, there was the marble base of a fountain ; but the fountain itself was gone : the Turks had cut it up into tombstones." Adrianople, the second capital of the Empire, was once richly furnished with khans of the most magnificent character. Their present condition is thus described by the same writer: "We visited two or three of their ruined khans, which exhibited sad and irritating sights. They had been admirably planned, and built even more solidly than those which had so much interested us at Khavsa. They had had fine stables, fine open quadrangles, stately arcades and corridors, commodious apartments for travellers and merchants, fire-proof magazines for merchandise, ovens, fountains, and baths ; but they had been knocking them down to get the iron and the lead, and to have the stones for throwing on the horrible causeway. These were works built by the Turks not three centuries ago ; and now the Turks themselves were destroying them." [1]

[1] MacFarlane's Turkey and its Destiny, vol. ii. pp. 304, 318. Sir Paul Rycaut describes these ancient khans as one who had seen them in their glory, and enjoyed many a time their unmeasured hospitality. "Especially such as are Princes and great Men, who build *Chans*, or Inns, which are receptacles for Travellers at night, are ranked in the first Order of sacred Benefactors, and are blessed and prayed for by the weary Guests who have found repose and refreshment through their Munificence ; and in these Buildings the Turks are extraordinary Magnificent in most parts of the Empire, having united to many of them a stately Mosch, Baths, and Shops for Artisans and Tradesmen to supply all the necessities of the Travellers ; and some of them are so endowed that every night the Guests are entertained at free cost with a convenient Supper, be their number more or less, according as the *Chan* is capable to receive. The form of these Buildings is for the most part according to the model of the

Perhaps there is nothing now existing which conveys to our minds a more vivid idea of the greatness of the contrast between the present and the past of the Turkish Empire, than these old khans; and for this reason they are worthy of a careful study. Christian writers are very apt to judge of the whole genius and history of Mohammedan society from the wretched social and political condition of the Mohammedan nations at the present time; and to speak of the Eastern world as having been "cursed by the demon of

highest and stateliest of our Halls, covered with Lead, though not altogether so high Roofed; yet some I have observed for their breadth and length very Magnificent. . . . Though in few of them are Apartments for different Companies, yet every one is sufficiently retired, having at a convenient distance different Chimneys for all parties of Guests to dress their Meat, and in the Winter for their Fire. The greatest inconvenience to men of watchful spirits, and used to quiet retirements, is the want of sleep, which until I have been over-tired with labor, and accustomed thereunto by divers days Journeys, hath been always a stranger to my eyes, by reason of the molestation of various Companies, some of which are always awake; some mending their Carts, others dressing Meat, others upon their departure, that in those public places never want noise to disturb those who sleep but of one ear. These stately *Chans*, or Inns, which with the *Moschs* are the only durable and magnificent Buildings in the Empire, are the Edifices of certain great Men, who, fearing to be deprived of their Riches by a hasty death, should they endeavor to continue them to their Family, chuse to perpetuate their Names, and secure their conditions by these public Works." — *Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 80.

The last remark cited above suggests one very important observation. Whatever degree of prosperity may have been enjoyed by the people in the better days of the Empire, there was never among them any security in the enjoyment, least of all in the transmission, of wealth. The great pasha was very likely to end his days by the bow-string, when all his wealth, which was often enormous, went at once to the imperial treasury; and the rich man of any order in society was always liable to find himself a mere sponge, to be squeezed by some greedy official above him. Few Turks, unless belonging to the Ulima, or the order of Deré-beys, have ever left much money to their children; and for this reason Turkey has always had but very little accumulated capital.

Islam" for twelve hundred years. But we cannot forget or overlook the splendor of the Saracen civilization; and these old khans alone, were history wholly silent upon the subject, might teach us that the Turkish Empire has not always been the weak, chaotic, misgoverned state which we see it to-day. But history is not silent; and those who study the records of the past must be well aware, that, in the great days of the Protestant Reformation, the Ottoman Empire was not only the most powerful state of the world, but that it was also comparatively civilized, well governed, and prosperous. In those days the general industry and wide-spread commercial activity which are shown to have existed by the public accommodations of these numberless and costly khans, and which were fostered by the comparatively strict and impartial administration of Moslem law, must have produced throughout the whole Empire the pleasing aspect of general thrift and social well-being.

CHAPTER XII.

DECAY AND TANZIMAT.

SOLYMAN the Magnificent was succeeded in 1566, by his son Selim II.; and from the death of this prince, in 1574, must be dated the decline of the Ottoman power. Selim did not inherit the greatness of his father. He was addicted to sensual indulgence, and lacked the commanding energy which had hitherto so remarkably characterized his race. From his day the Sultans no longer appeared at the head of their armies. They remained ingloriously in the seclusion of the seraglio, leaving their military operations to be conducted by their lieutenants. The ten Sultans from Othman, the founder of the dynasty, to Solyman the Magnificent, filled the throne for a period of two hundred and sixty years, an average of twenty-six and a half years to each reign. Every one of these Sultans was a man of energy and ability, well qualified to direct the tremendous engine of Turkish power. This long succession of long-lived and able sovereigns is perhaps without a parallel in history. But, from the accession of Selim II., the character of the imperial line became radically and

permanently changed. This change in the character of the Sultans was owing largely to a new regulation introduced by Solyman, — a regulation in which he signally failed to display his usual far-seeing wisdom. Hitherto the princes of the imperial family had been trained to incessant activity in all the duties of their high position: with their earliest manhood they had been placed in positions of high responsibility, and intrusted with important governments. Thus from their childhood up they were kept in the best possible school for the future Sultan. But, of all these able and ambitious princes, but one could reign. For the rest the bow-string or the headsman's cimeter was the inevitable doom. The great power with which they were intrusted was thus a constant temptation to intrigue and rebellion. To guard against this evil, Solyman ordained that the princes of the blood should no longer be intrusted with important commands, but should remain under the Sultan's supervision, within the precincts of the court. This ordinance answered its immediate end; but it destroyed the vigor and greatness of the imperial line. The young princes grew up dissolute, enervated, incompetent, wholly unfitted for the great responsibilities of the throne.

But, little as Selim II. could emulate the great deeds of his father, his reign was successful and illustrious, displaying to Europe no indications of the coming decline. The energy infused into every department of the government by the master-hand

of Solyman still remained. Barbarossa had left his naval command to no unworthy successors; Tripoli bowed with Tunis and Algiers to the yoke of the Sultan; and the Ottoman dominions in the North of Africa were extended from the Isthmus of Suez to the Empire of Morocco. The magnificent island of Cyprus, also, through the criminal negligence of the Christian powers, was wrested from the Venetians in a single campaign. But this last and most disgraceful defeat of the Christian arms was not unavenged. The armament of the Christian naval powers, consisting of two hundred and sixteen vessels under the command of Don John of Austria, too late to save Cyprus, sought out the united Turkish fleet where it lay at anchor in the Gulf of Patras near Lepanto. Here, on the 7th of October, 1570, was fought one of the most terrific and destructive naval battles recorded in history.[1] The victory of the Christians, though purchased at a fearful cost, was complete. The Turks were said to have lost nearly forty thousand men.

From the death of Selim II., in 1574, the decline of the Empire, though slow, was steady and sure. Gradually the Crescent waned, and Turkish power lost its terror in the eyes of Christian Europe. To trace reign by reign the long, inglorious line of the Sultans who have filled the Turkish throne from the death of Selim II. to the present time, would be a task as unprofitable as tedious. With a few words, therefore,

[1] Malta, Past and Present, p. 98.

we may pass over an interval of two hundred years. Once, and once only, during this long period, did the wave of Turkish invasion rise to threaten seriously the safety of Europe. During the reign of Mohammed IV., from 1648 to 1687, the Turkish Government enjoyed the services of a number of able ministers and generals, who partially, and for a short time, revived the ancient glories of the Empire. For twenty-five years a war had dragged on its slow length for the conquest of the island of Candia, or Crete. This war, in which the Venetians lost thirty thousand men, and the Turks a hundred thousand, was at last ended by a vigorous effort of the Turkish commanders, in which their armies equalled the valor of their best days. Flushed with the glory of this great victory, the officials of the divan meditated more important conquests. Germany, enfeebled by the long struggle of the thirty years' war, seemed to offer the promise of an easy victory; and it was determined to march once more upon Vienna. In July, 1583, Kara Mustapha the Grand Vizier, at the head of an army of one hundred and sixty thousand men, encamped before the imperial city.[1] The Germans, as usual, were unprepared. Thirteen thousand regular troops were thrown into the city, making, with the citizens under arms, a garrison of twenty thousand men. At the head of another army of about the same strength, the Duke of Lorraine, a veteran and able commander, was obliged to remain encamped

[1] Murray's Sieges of Vienna, pp. 99–147.

at a safe distance, awaiting the tardy arrival of the Germans and Poles. For more than forty days the siege went on. The garrison displayed the utmost bravery; and every assault of the Turks was repulsed with fearful slaughter. But mines and the Turkish cannon were doing their work. Great breaches were made in the walls; and the time came at length when a general assault could hardly have failed to carry the city. The order for this assault was not given. It would seem that the Grand Vizier, assured of success, had determined to compel the city to surrender, that he might secure for himself the spoils of the imperial palace. The delay proved fatal to the Turks. On the night of the 6th of September, the signal was seen which announced to the beleaguered city that deliverance was at hand; and on the 11th John Sobieski, King of Poland, the hero of his age and the terror of the Turks, appeared before the city at the head of a German and Polish army of eighty-five thousand men. On the 12th was fought the last great battle between Christian and Turk for supremacy beyond the Danube. The Turks were utterly routed; their camp, artillery, provisions, ammunition, every thing, were left in the hands of the Christians; Vienna was delivered, and the long dominion of the Turks in Hungary was at an end. Kara Mustapha had reached Belgrade on his retreat when he received from his incensed master the decree pronouncing his doom. He was still at the head of eighty thousand men, and might have defied the feeble Sultan; but

such was not the loyalty of the Turk of the old school. He took the paper, pressed it to his forehead, said a short prayer, then without a murmur took the bow-string, and with his own hand noosed it about his neck.

The decay of the Empire, though steady and sure, was slow. Great armies were still raised ; able Turkish commanders from time to time appeared ; great battles were still fought, in which the Turkish soldiers sometimes displayed all the ancient valor of their race. But the whole system was antiquated and out of joint; and the feeble Sultans, growing up in the seclusion of the seraglio, were wholly unequal to the arduous duties of their position. At the beginning of the present century, the imperial government had sunk to a very low state of weakness and disorder. The great pashas, little else, many of them, than petty independent kings, were insubordinate and rebellious. Both the military and financial administration were in the greatest confusion. The Janizaries, once so efficient and irresistible in their thorough discipline, had become a mutinous, disorderly rabble, terrible only to their masters.[1] In the first years of

[1] The regular pay of the Janizaries was very small; and, as they were allowed to marry, it became necessary for them to look out for other means of supporting their families. They thus often engaged in trade and other pursuits, in which, from their training and energy, they were pretty sure to succeed. This had already begun to be the case largely two hundred years ago. The Janizaries were getting to be otherwise engaged, and averse to war. At the beginning of the present century, the Janizaries considered their positions hereditary, and themselves as above all law or restraint. Many of them appeared in the ranks only to receive their pay, were engaged in trade, and

the present century, Selim III., a Sultan of more than ordinary energy and ability, attempted to remedy these great and growing evils by reducing the rebellious pashas to submission, and bringing the Janizaries back to discipline and obedience. The struggle was too arduous for his strength, and cost him his throne and his life. His successor, Mahmoud II., if not more able, had more of craft and shrewdness; and his accession in 1808 marks the era of *tanzimat*, or centralization and reform. Mahmoud determined to completely revolutionize the government, and to organize it anew upon the principles which prevailed in the Christian monarchies of Europe. As the first step in this herculean task, he proceeded to form a regular and standing army to replace both branches of the old military force, the Janizaries and the irregular cavalry; and, no sooner had he made sufficient progress in this enterprise to enable him to take such a step, than he made use of the new army by one terrible slaughter to annihilate the Janizaries, thus relieving both himself and the Empire of their mischievous and ungovernable power.

A second feature of Mahmoud's plan was to deprive the pashas of their great power, and to make them mere civil officers, with fixed salaries, holding

formed the wealthiest and most influential class in the towns and cities where they were located. The order had become immensely extended, numbering a hundred and fifty thousand registered members. See Rycaut's Present State of the Ottoman Empire, p. 82; and Ranke's History of Servia, pp. 27, 29, 64.

For a graphic account of the arrogance, lawlessness, and violence of the Janizaries of Constantinople fifty years ago, see Slade's Travels in Turkey, vol. i. p. 140.

their places for short periods, and wholly subordinate to the central government. Thirdly, the great capitation tax, paid for their heads by all non-Moslem subjects of the Porte, was no longer to be farmed out, or sold to the highest bidder, but received in each province by officers appointed for the purpose. Finally, the Deré-beys, the ancient hereditary nobility of Asia Minor, were to be suppressed, and their authority and wealth transferred to the central government. All these changes were, by force or craft, successfully accomplished; and when Mahmoud died, in 1839, his government was as thoroughly centralized as that of any Christian sovereign in Europe.

But, instead of saving and strengthening the Empire, these vast and sweeping changes only served to hasten the ruin which they had been intended to avert. The government was not strengthened; and except that it was no longer in danger from mutinous Janizaries, or from powerful and rebellious pashas, it was in every way worse off than before. The standing army, a terrible burden to the state, and by its incessant conscriptions goading the Turkish population to madness, was good for nothing against the forces of any Christian power; the capitation tax under the new order of things, instead of enriching the treasury, hardly paid for collecting; and the salaried pashas proved but too often mere worthless and extortionate encumbrances upon the provinces. And, while the government was rather weakened than strengthened by this attempted reform, the provinces

and the unhappy people were ruined. A government more wretched, worthless, and helpless than that of the Turkish Empire has been for the past thirty years, has rarely existed on the earth. "The country has certainly not yet recovered from the change. During the former state of things, with all the acts of tyranny and oppression which absolute power engendered, there was more happiness among the people, and more prosperity in the land. The hereditary chiefs looked upon their subjects as so much property to be improved and protected like the soil itself. They were a source of revenue: consequently heavy taxes, which impeded labor, and drove the laborer from the land, were from interest rarely imposed upon them. The government left the enforcement of order to the local chiefs; all the tribute received from them was so much clear gain to the treasury, because no collectors were needed to raise it, nor troops to enforce its payment. The revenues of the Empire were equal to great wars; and there was neither public debt nor embarrassment. Now that the system of centralization has been fully carried out, the revenues are more than absorbed in the measures necessary to collect them; and the officers of government, having no interest whatever in the districts over which they are placed, neglect all that may tend to the prosperity and well-being of their inhabitants."[1]

[1] Layard's Nineveh and Babylon, p. 10. If any one is inclined to question whether the language of Mr. Layard as here cited is not too strong, let him read the article on Provincial Turkey, in the London Quarterly Review for October, 1874.

Of the "hereditary chiefs" here spoken of by Mr. Layard, the Deré-beys formed the largest, if not the most important class, a class now "reformed" out of existence. "These provincial nobles," to quote the words of Mr. Slade, "whose rights had been respected for four centuries, . . . had two crimes in the eyes of Mahmoud II.: they held their property from their ancestors, and they had riches. To alter the tenure of the former, and the destination of the latter, was his object." [1] These words were written nearly fifty years ago; and even then the writer saw very clearly what must be the result of this so-called reform. "Sultan Mahmoud," he observed, "kills the goose for the eggs." Another and very recent writer, already referred to, will tell us what this result has proved. "On a rising ground . . . stand the ruins of a large building, once the residence of the country bey, the hereditary lord of the manor and governor of the district in one. Every fragment is significant; each stone tells its story. That gap in the ragged outline of broken wall was originally the wide entrance-gate, through which the bey used to ride out, surrounded by his men-at-arms and retainers, by whole troops of horsemen mounted and equipped, . . . and all ready at a moment's notice . . . to set off for Persia, for Moldavia, for Hungary, wherever the horse-tails might lead them; one hundred, two hundred, three hundred troopers, it might be, from a district that now can hardly furnish twenty or thirty miserable conscripts.

[1] Travels in Turkey, vol. i. p. 118.

. . . Over the whole extent of the hill-summit stretch . . . the ruins of the mansion-castle. . . . Through the now fenceless entry we advance into what was once a wide, square court-yard. Here, not half a century ago, was the ordinary place of afternoon resort; here the notables of the neighborhood, . . . land-owners, farmers, traders, often the peasants too, and the day-laborers, used to assemble for gossip or business. The place was open to all. In the large room, looking down on one side of the court . . . the bey had his customary seat, with a few relatives and friends. Here he used to administer rough, off-hand justice, . . . an informal tribunal without fees, though not always without bribery and partiality, but . . . tempered by the rules and prescriptions of the Koran, often appealed to . . . and rarely without effect. We . . . notice the still smoke-blackened vestiges of the wide hearth and spacious chimney-place, where the bey's kitchen once stood. Here simmered the great caldrons full of rice and meat, out of which the many hangers-on of the castle . . . made their meals. True, the mutton had not always been paid for; and the rice might have been summarily levied, not without fight shown for it, as a road-tax on some passing caravan. But, however acquired, it was ultimately consumed within the district, and to the profit of the district. . . . In the former times, what was taken out of one pocket was, at least, put into the other.

"All up the sides of the green hill, far over the wide

Asiatic plain, we see the yet uneffaced traces of irrigation channels, now broken down and dry; while, removed from their original places, and strewn at random over the ground here and there, lie the boundary stones that once marked the limits of fields, since abandoned to weed and bush. At forty per cent taxation . . . agriculture is not a paying business. . . . Under the beys the tenantry were sometimes, no doubt, vexed by exactions; but they were not less often relieved by exemptions. The shepherd who lives among his flocks knows each one, how much wool they will bear to be shorn of: the distant sheep-contractor looks only to his accounts. Besides, here again the substance of the land, if occasionally extorted rather than gathered, returned again in great measure, and by no distant circuit, to the producers. This family was fed from the bey's kitchen; that one had a couple of sons maintained among his troop; a third received reasonable advantages for the crops by the water-channel constructed at the bey's charge, or the road repaired under his direction; while a bad season lightened from off the shoulders of all alike the burden which would otherwise have sunk them in hopeless debt. Horses, too, were cared for. The cavalry contingent for the district . . . was fixed, and the quota strictly exacted on occasion, by a government that above all was military. Not one of those conditions but is reversed at the present day. Muscovite, Frank, German, whoever lists, may now assail the provinces with the safe assurance, that, the

regular troops once overcome, no further resistance will remain. The people, starved, disheartened, disarmed, and thoroughly alienated at heart from a government that is a mere synonyme for fiscal exaction, . . . will offer no resistance. 'If the Russians, when they come, pay for what they take, they are welcome; and we will supply all they require,' is the common saying of the Anatolian peasant.

"Taking our stand again on the ruin-crowned hill, we distinguish in the landscape around us two or three irregular-shaped grass-grown cemeteries, with broken tombstones inclined at every angle from ninety to zero. The inscriptions on many are scarce fifty or sixty years old. These, and the clumps of giant cypress-trees that cast their black obelisks of shadow over them, are all that is left of the thriving villages once near by. . . . Want, disease (the invariable attendant on protracted want), emigration, and last, not least, military conscription, have done their work; they are doing it with those who remain."[1] It would seem, that, in Asia Minor at least, the prosperity of the provinces and the strength of the Empire lay, beyond all question, in the domains of these hereditary chiefs; and that in their destruction the government has cut off its own right hand.

In speaking of the present condition of the Turkish Empire, Mr. Hallam has this observation: "The signs of internal weakness have not yet been confirmed by the dismemberment of provinces; and the

[1] London Quarterly Review for October, 1874, pp. 173, 174.

arch of dominion that long since has seemed nodding to its fall, and totters at every blast of the North, still rests upon the landmarks of ancient conquest, and spans the ample regions from Bagdad to Belgrade." [1] But this fact is not owing to any cohesive strength of the Empire itself. In 1833 the vanguard of the Egyptian army, under Ibrahim Pasha, which had already driven the imperial forces from Syria and Asia Minor, appeared at the gates of Brûsa wholly unresisted; and, but for the interference of the Christian powers, Constantinople itself would, in all probability, have surrendered without a siege. From that day to this, the guaranty of these powers, and that alone, has preserved the integrity of the Ottoman dominions.

Under the old order of things, the administration of government, so far as it related to the affairs of the people, was to a great extent local and municipal. The towns and villages taxed themselves for the repairing of roads and bridges, and for a municipal guard. Now the government has assumed all the revenues, and undertaken to perform the duties. The taxes are exacted rigorously, often extortionately; the duties are not performed. The government appropriated the endowments of the mosques and colleges, engaging to support these institutions from the revenues of the State; but the colleges are now empty alike of professors and students, and colleges and mosques are everywhere tumbling to ruin.

[1] Middle Ages, p. 259.

Rigidly as the old municipal taxes for roads and bridges are still exacted by the government, scarcely a dollar is expended, with a few great exceptions, in improving the miserable tracks called roads from one end of the Empire to the other. Fifteen years ago there was scarcely a mile of good road in the Empire, with a single exception in the neighborhood of Constantinople; and the overland transportation of produce, even for a few miles, was next to impossible.[1] But, even if this were not so, the grinding exactions of the government are enough of themselves to paralyze all industry and all enterprise. Besides the capitation tax already alluded to, there are the Sultan's tenths and two or three other heavy taxes, amounting altogether to from thirty to forty per cent on all possible gains, levied upon Turks and Christians alike. Excepting the capitation tax, these are all farmed, or sold to the highest bidder, who collects them as he can. These taxes are of course the occasion of the most oppressive extortion. But, in addition to these,

[1] Within the past few years a number of excellent roads have been built by foreign companies and engineers, at the expense of the government, on some of the great thoroughfares of the Empire. Rev. T. C. Trowbridge, for eighteen years a missionary in Turkey, who has kindly revised these pages, and to whom the writer is indebted for many valuable suggestions, speaks of such roads from Trebizond to Erzroom, from Beirût to Damascus, from the Sea of Marmora to Brûsa, and others upon the great routes through the Taurus Mountains. These, however, seem to be only exceptions which prove the rule; great enterprises undertaken by the government for military purposes, and to impress its European creditors with a sense of its energy and progress, while throughout the provinces generally the roads, and all means of communication excepting by telegraph, are utterly neglected. See the article in the London Quarterly Review for October, 1874, referred to above.

there are duties upon almost all commercial transactions, which are more oppressive still. If the farmer at Adrianople would send a cask of wine to the capital, he must pay a heavy duty at starting, and another at his market; both together more than consuming his profits. The result is that it does not pay to raise any thing to sell except for the home market.

These burdens press far more heavily upon the inefficient, indolent Turks than upon the more industrious and energetic Christians. Excepting the capitation tax, the Turks suffer the same exactions as their Christian neighbors; while in the military conscription they are subject to a crushing burden from which the Christians are wholly exempt. No Christian under ordinary circumstances can serve in a Turkish army: to the Turks, the conscription is the constant dread and terror of their lives. Scenes like the following are of constant occurrence. At Kara-Keui in Asia Minor, "we had a melancholy sight in a drove of poor peasants who had deserted from the army, and who were chained by the neck. There were nineteen of them, and only two *tufekjees* to guard them. Chained though they were, we wondered that they did not try to escape again, the escort being so weak and badly armed: but they looked like men resigned to *kismet* (destiny); like men who felt that, if it was their destiny to run away, so it was their destiny to be caught; and, on the failure of one experiment, your poor Turk will not often try the same again. They had been brought all the way from

Iconium, their native place, to which they had fled. A matron of the village, seeing them in chains, said, with a bitterness that came from the soul, '*What mother would now have male children?*' All the women seemed deeply to commiserate the fate of the deserters; the men were afraid to speak."[1] The feeling is widely prevalent among the Turks, that they will not rear sons to be thus torn from them; and unnatural and criminal means are but too commonly taken to prevent the birth of children. From this and other causes, but few Turkish children are anywhere to be seen; and the Moslem population is steadily decreasing. "It was becoming almost rare to find a poor Turkish family rearing more than one child. We seldom saw two in a poor Turkish house; three was a number altogether extraordinary. On the other side, the poor Greeks and Armenians had very generally large families. Many of the poor Turks did not scruple to say that they could not afford to bring up children; that daughters were a useless incumbrance, and that if they had sons the government tore them away, just as they were beginning to be useful at home, to make soldiers of them. *The conscription was the dread and abhorrence of the Turkish women.* It was no mystery at all, or a mystery only covered with the thinnest and most transparent veil, that forced abortion was the prevalent, common practice among these Turkish women."[2]

It would seem, however, that as we recede from

[1] Turkey and its Destiny, vol. i. p. 193. [2] Idem, vol. i. p. 146.

the capital, with its corrupting and demoralizing influences, the state of things becomes sensibly improved. Mr. Herrick, one of our missionaries at Constantinople, writing of a visit which he had made in October, 1865, to Cæsarea, a city lying in about the centre of the eastern half of the peninsula of Asia Minor, speaks thus of what he saw: "I was highly gratified with the appearance of the church and people generally, their intelligence, and their affectionate cordiality. I was quite taken by surprise by the social courtesy and propriety shown at the large congratulatory gathering in the house of the new pastor on the evening of ordination day; hardly expecting to find so much social refinement in the heart of Asia Minor. In common with all who travel in the interior of the country, I was struck with the character of the villages immediately surrounding Cæsarea, — the houses built of hewn stone, and the people showing a very unusual amount of intelligence and enterprise." [1] Col. Chesney bears similar testimony to the condition of the people in this part of Asia Minor: "Agriculture is not by any means neglected; and the supplies in the numerous bazaars prove that the husbandman's labor is rewarded by ample returns, whilst the state of the villages shows that the inhabitants enjoy a considerable degree of comfort, with respect to both food and clothing. Notwithstanding what is thus taken from him (that is, in legal and illegal exactions), the peasant of Asia Minor still enjoys a fair portion of comfort." [2]

[1] Missionary Herald, February, 1866, p. 54.

[2] Expedition to the Euphrates, vol. i. pp. 371, 380.

Even in troubled, distracted Syria, there are not wanting signs of a prosperity which will be looked for in vain nearer the capital. Under the protecting shadow of the foreign consulates, the population of Beirût has advanced in thirty years from five thousand to forty thousand. "Thirty years ago there was scarcely a decent house outside of the walls : now two-thirds of the population reside in the gardens; and hundreds of convenient dwellings, and not a few large and noble mansions, adorn the charming suburbs." [1]

The truth is, that the people of almost every town and village in Turkey enjoy just so much of their rights, and consequently of prosperity, as they have unanimity and spirit to insist upon. The government officials have usually but a very small force at their command, and rarely venture upon any very flagrant violation of justice in the face of a united and determined front on the part of the people. In the midst of the poverty and ruin of the plain of Brûsa, Mr. MacFarlane found a little village, the people of which, being half Turk and half Turcoman, were characterized by a very unusual energy and spirit, and would submit to no injustice. Just before his visit, the revenue officers had been there, and, in conference with the head men of the village, had agreed upon a fair apportionment of the taxes. But presently the tax-gatherers appeared with falsified bills in which the assessment agreed upon had been nearly doubled.

[1] Thomson's The Land and the Book, vol. i. p. 46.

The head men explained and remonstrated in vain, until one of them coolly pointed to a lake, and asked the rascally publicans if they could swim; when they hastily mounted their horses, and rode away.[1]

The great curse of the Turkish Empire for the past thirty years has been that the power of the government has been almost wholly in the hands of two classes of most unprincipled and rapacious men, viz., the pashas and the Armenian bankers. The pashas are many of them low-born and ignorant men, wholly unfit for their places, and caring for nothing but gain. Some of the greatest and most powerful of them were originally foreign-born slaves, bought for money in the open market, while others had a yet more infamous origin.[2] "Old Khosreff Pasha, and the elder Halil Pasha, were both Georgian slaves; and both had filled the very highest offices of the state. Khosreff had been sold when a boy at Tophana; and, when he had become a great man, he had himself bought Halil in the same market. When Halil grew in greatness, he bought slaves for himself. Old Khosreff, his former master, who was not without jealousy at Halil's rapid elevation, used to be facetious on the subject. 'Ha, Halil,' said the old fox, 'I am a better man than thou art: I was sold for ten thousand piasters, when the piaster was double the money it was worth when I bought thee; and for thee, O Halil!

[1] Turkey and its Destiny, vol. i. p. 105.

[2] See MacFarlane's account of Mustapha Nouree Pasha, Turkey and its Destiny, vol. ii. p. 19.

I did pay only five thousand piasters. Mashallah! I was always worth more than thou. Dost remember, Halil, when I bought thee from the belly-pinching dealer, and took thee to my plentiful house?'" [1]

The Armenian bankers, who wield the entire monetary power of the Empire, are no better than the pashas. They are as a rule an ignorant, boorish, and most rapacious set of usurers, without enterprise or public spirit, who do nothing whatever for the good of their country, and whose whole business is to lend money at exorbitant rates of interest, and get hold, in one way or another, of the revenues of the state. They will neither initiate any improvement themselves, nor suffer any one else to do so. If some intelligent foreigner should attempt so much as to start a farm, and introduce upon it improved methods of agriculture, some great banker would be sure to become jealous of the innovation, and find means to put a stop to it. The pashas are all deeply in debt to these bankers, because, being poor at the outset, they have to go to them for their outfit, and for large advances of money. It is thus for the interest of the bankers to sustain them; and whatever may be their malfeasance in office, or their crimes, their financial partners are generally able to uphold them, or to save them from any thing beyond a temporary disgrace.

So great are the difficulties and temptations sur-

[1] Turkey and its Destiny, vol. ii. p. 251. For a full account of Khosreff, or Khosrew Pasha, *seraskier* pasha, or minister of war, in 1829, see Slade's Travels in Turkey, vol. i. p. 60.

rounding the high officials of the Turkish government, that very few Turks, whatever may have been their virtue and probity in private life, have the strength of character to withstand them. They find their governments disorganized, poverty-stricken, and in the most wretched condition; they hold them by the most uncertain tenure, being liable to be recalled at any time. They are weak, rarely having at their command an adequate force for the preservation of their authority and the enforcement of the law. They live in an atmosphere of fraud, intrigue, and corruption, constantly surrounded by designing and unscrupulous men, all of them plotting for their own selfish ends, against each other and against them. Under such circumstances, whatever the pasha's previous character may have been, it will be very strange if he does not soon come to feel that his only chance for success is in the employment of intrigue and craft, if it does not become his great aim to squeeze the largest possible amount of money out of his wretched province while it remains in his power. There have been and are still high-souled and honorable men among the Turkish pashas, like Tahyar Pasha of Mosul, the friend of Mr. Layard;[1] but, as a rule, they have been more like Daoud Pasha of Bagdad, as he is described by Mr. Rich,[2] men treacherous and corrupt to the last degree.

[1] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 9.

[2] Residence in Kŭrdistan, vol. i. p. 131. After mentioning an act of the basest falsehood and treachery on the part of Daoud Pasha, Mr. Rich adds,

It results from this state of things, that every thing in the Empire — places, patronage, influence, and justice itself is shamelessly bought and sold. There is nowhere any security of person or of property; and industry and enterprise are hopelessly fettered and paralyzed.

Under the terrible burdens thus resting upon them, the Christians struggle with some small degree of energy and success, while the inefficient, listless Turks are settling down into gloomy and utter despair. Such is the issue of Sultan Mahmoud's grand project of *Tanzimat*, or reform.

"This anecdote is unquestionable, and is one of many of a similar character which I could relate of Daoud Pasha, *and almost every other Turkish chief whom I have known.*"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TURKS OF TO-DAY.

THE Turkish character is, and has always been, a strange compound of strength and weakness. More energetic men, or men more able and capable, than the early Sultans, have rarely appeared among any half-civilized people in any age; and the great qualities which distinguished them were the characteristics of their race. To a certain extent they are so still. Mr. Layard has somewhere the remark, that the Turk seems born to command, and that, in a boy of nine years old, you can see the dignity and fire of the military chief. As a rule, the Turks have always been noted for many admirable qualities. They have been honest, generous, and hospitable, and, in their way, earnestly religious. Formerly, before the days of "reform," the Turks were proverbial for their good faith. The word of a Turkish trader was as good as his bond. Upon this point Dr. Eli Smith remarks, "A Turk will cheat all that he can in making a bargain; and yet he is proverbial for good faith in keeping it when made." [1]

[1] Researches in Armenia, vol. i. p. 213.

Those who have known the better class of Turks most intimately in former times have esteemed them most highly. Mr. Layard (and the testimony of no man upon this subject is entitled to more respectful consideration) speaks as follows of the old Turkish beys and aghas whom he had known: "Amongst them were some rich in virtues and high and noble feeling. It has been frequently my lot to find a representative of this nearly extinct class in some remote and almost unknown spot in Asia Minor or Albania.[1] I have been received with affectionate warmth, at the end of a day's journey, by a venerable bey or agha in his spacious mansion, now fast crumbling to ruin, but still bright with the remains of rich yet tasteful Oriental decoration; his long beard, white as snow, falling low on his breast; his many-folded turban shadowing his benevolent yet manly countenance, and his limbs enveloped in the noble garments rejected by the new generation; his hall open to all comers; the guest, neither asked from whence he came nor whither he was going, dipping his hands with him in the same dish; his servants standing with reverence before him, rather his children than his servants; his revenues spent in raising fountains on the wayside for the weary traveller, or in building caravansaries on the dreary plain; not only professing

1 This reference to Albania suggests the inquiry how many of these old "Turkish lords" were really Turks. The Mohammedans of Europe are all called Turks, while it is well known that they are most of them only the descendants of apostate Christians. The number of true Turks in the European provinces is very small.

but practising all the duties and virtues enjoined by the Koran, which are Christian duties and virtues too; in his manners, his appearance, his hospitality, and his faithfulness, a perfect model for a Christian gentleman. The race is fast passing away; and I feel grateful in being able to testify, with a few others, to its existence once against prejudice, intolerance, and so-called reform." [1]

Every village in Turkey has its *oda-bashi*, or dispenser of hospitality, sometimes more than one. Of these men, Mr. MacFarlane gives the following account: "When a devout Turk finds his substance increase, or fancies that he is growing prosperous, he reminds himself of the injunctions of the Prophet, and of the blessings promised hereafter by the Koran to such as exercise charity and hospitality; and he takes the resolution of setting up an *odà*. If he continue prosperous, the poor wayfarer shares in his prosperity; if he become poorer, the stranger must take what he can afford to give." He and his companions spent a night at Musal, a miserable ruined Turkish village in the hill country of Asia Minor, a little north-west from Katayah. "The *oda-bashi* would take no payment, and would have been grievously offended if we had pressed any upon him. To the other peasants who had contributed to our provend, we gave a little money, which they neither refused nor thanked us for. Your true Turkish peasant has a high, gentlemanly feeling in these matters. He

[1] Nineveh and Babylon, p. 10.

takes the stranger's money; but he takes it as if he were ashamed, and thought the least said about it the better. He takes it as if it were against the grain; as if, in accepting payment for a few creature comforts, he submits to an unkindly fate; his poverty, but not his will, consents. Give them what you will, they will never ask for more, or say one word about it. No poverty — and we soon saw them in the deepest — altered this gentlemanly feeling about money got or to be gotten in this way." [1]

The better qualities of the Turkish character are thus summed up by Col. Chesney: —

"Although of a grave, phlegmatic, and even listless exterior, the Turk is remarkable for his gentleness towards his children; and he makes no difference between them and his slaves or other servants. In addition to alms to the widow and the orphan, his generosity is frequently exercised in constructing mosques, khans, and fountains. Trees and burial-grounds are his delight; and horses, dogs, cats, and pigeons share in his consideration. Scarcely anywhere else are birds so tame, or so much linked with mankind, as in Turkey; even the children respect their nests. . . . In summing up his character, it may here be observed that truth, openness, and candor, contentment, and entire resignation to his lot, are qualities seldom denied by any one to the Turk." [2]

This, however, is the description of the Turks

[1] Turkey and its Destiny, pp. 152, 191.

[2] Expedition to the Euphrates and Tigris, vol. i. p. 378.

rather as they were, than as they now are. During the past forty years a sad and radical change has come over them. Their old religious spirit is fast dying out, and giving place to a cold and stolid scepticism, which too often seems verging to downright atheism. Formerly every Turk was most scrupulous in performing his devotions five times each day, as prescribed by the Koran. Now in some populous towns, as the muezzin ascends the minaret at the appointed hour, to call the people to prayer, hardly a Turk will be seen to move. With their religious zeal, they are losing all heart and hope. Everywhere they are poorer, more thriftless, and more dispirited than their Christian neighbors; and every thing about them indicates hopeless poverty and decay. With stolid indifference they await their impending fate, saying it is *Kismet*, their appointed destiny, against which it is useless to struggle. It seems hardly possible that these poor, spirit-broken Turks should be the children of those brave and fiery Osmanlies, who, three hundred years ago, were regarded with such dread and alarm by the whole Christian world. Yet so it is. And, as we look more carefully at the matter, it may be readily understood. The Turks, like our own Indians, have ever been the wild, untamable children of the desert. They seem to have no aptitude for a higher civilization, to be altogether incapable of pursuing successfully the vocations and professions of civilized society.

"They have neither diligence, intelligence, nor

forethought. No Turk is an improving landlord, or even a repairing landlord. When he has money, he spends it on objects of immediate gratification. His most permanent investment is a timber palace, to last about as long as its builder. His only professions are shop-keeping and service. He cannot engage in any foreign commerce, as he speaks no language but his own. No one ever heard of a Turkish house of business, or of a Turkish banker or merchant or manufacturer. If he has lands or houses, he lives on the rent; if he has money, he spends it, or employs it in stocking a shop, in which he can smoke and gossip all day long. The only considerable enterprise in which he ever engages is the farming of some branch of the public revenue. . . . They cannot dig, to beg they are ashamed. They use the most mischievous means to prevent large families. They kill their female children, the conscription takes off the males: and they disappear. The only memorial of what was fifty years ago a populous Turkish village is a crowded burial-ground, now unused." [1]

"Mr. C. said, 'The Turks could not keep their ground even then, but they managed to live when they could make the Christian rayahs work for them at the very lowest pay, and when with the connivance of the pashas, who then presided over the collection of the revenue, there was always a wide difference made between their taxes, and those extorted from the Greeks and Armenians. But with only the dif-

[1] Senior's Journal, p. 210.

ference of the *Kharatch* (capitation tax) in their favor, the Turks will starve and die out; and, a little sooner or later, all their farms and villages must either be deserted, or fall into the hands of the rayahs. There can be no mistake about it. The process is going on. It was in progress even before this farming of the revenue, and equalizing of taxes. Thirty-two years ago, when I first knew the plain of Brûsa, there were villages that were entirely Turkish, and other villages where Turks and rayahs were mixed. In the first sort there are now more rayahs than Turks; and, in the second, the Turks have almost entirely disappeared.'"[1]

From the Sultan down to the lowest peasant, it seems as if no Turk had any aptitude or capacity for business of any kind. The business of the government is done by Armenians and Franks, the business of society by the native Christians. The Turks have not enterprise and ingenuity enough to take the food which nature provides ready to their hand. They sit starving in their hovels while the wilderness about them swarms with game, and their streams with the finest fish. They have no resource; and, in multitudes of cases, their condition is sad and pitiable indeed. The following description of the state of things in some of the Turkish villages in Asia Minor is a striking illustration of the listless, hopeless poverty into which the Turks are but too commonly sinking: "We halted at a Turkish hamlet called Kukoort-Keui. . . . The guest-house was a hovel. The dis-

[1] Turkey and its Destiny, vol. i. p. 151.

penser of hospitality, the poor *oda-bashi,* was so very poor that he could furnish us with nothing but some straw matting, a little milk, and a bowl of boiled wheat. . . . They were indeed steeped in poverty to the very lips; for they had hardly a pipe among them to put to their lips, and no tobacco until we gave them some. They were gloomy and most sad. We did not hear one cheerful voice, or see a smile, in Kukoort. They complained that the load of taxation was heavier than they could bear. . . . They went into explanations which proved, if at all correct, that the usurers were charging interest upon the debt at the rate of from forty to fifty per cent. The famine of 1845 had visited these districts. By order of the humane Sultan, seed, or money to purchase it, was furnished them, that they might rally, and escape future starvation. The seed and the money were provided by the aghas and the Armenian *seraffs* (bankers) at Kutayah; and *for these advances* they were now paying interest at the rate of twenty-five or thirty per cent. The poor fellows said that they could never rally, . . . that there was nothing for it but to starve and die in misery, or to follow the example which had lately been set them by the Turks of two neighboring villages, who had fled for some distant district, leaving their empty falling houses and their untilled fields to pay their flinty-hearted creditors. . . . Those sudden, desperate emigrations were becoming frequent up the country. The pashas and the *mudirs* and other local governors did what

they could to prevent them; for, if the population disappeared, . . . what would become of the taxes expected from the province? Two instances came under our own observation. . . . Some Turks had abandoned their villages, and were migrating with their little stocks towards the lower part of the plain of Brûsa; their agha came down after them to the pasha. Khodja Arab (the chief of police) was let loose upon them; and the khodja's *tufekjees* drove the poor people back to their villages, threatening to shoot or hang them if they tried another flight." [1]

From the facts thus brought before us, it is evident that the whole tendency of things in the Turkish nation is downward, and not upward; that it gives no indication whatever of any development or renovation which will raise it again to its former high position. The only signs of progress and improvement in Turkey are among the Christian population; and in that population is the hope, and the only hope, of the country.

The Turkish power is a thing of the past. Its life and spirit are gone, its mission is accomplished. Though it still lies spread like a gloomy pall over vast territories, it is only until the coming of new movements and grander agencies shall sweep it from the earth, and bury it forever from human sight. Unlike the Saracens, the Turks have never taken root in the lands they subdued. They have never become assimilated to the children of the soil. They have

[1] Idem, vol. i. p. 159.

effected no re-organization of society, have established no enduring institutions. They have done nothing for the material interests, nothing to develop the resources, of the countries they inhabit. They have been from the beginning nothing but the unproducing masters of a subject people ; masters at first capable and energetic, and to a certain extent mild and just, but adding nothing by their own industry to the common stock. They have thus been always a heavy weight upon the necks of the Christian population, until such time as they become strong enough to throw it off. That time is now approaching. The Turks themselves are well aware that this is written in the counsels of heaven ; and, with no hope for the future of their national life, they gloomily await the inevitable hour.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EMPIRE AND CHRISTIANITY.

WHILE the political aspects of the Empire have been growing year by year more gloomy and more hopeless, another change has taken place in its affairs, of a different and more encouraging character; a change which has wrought the enfranchisement of the Christian population, and the full establishment, so far as the forms of law are concerned, of universal religious freedom.

In 1843 an unfortunate Armenian who had declared himself a Mohammedan abandoned his new faith, and returned to his native church. By Moslem law, this was a capital offence; and the poor apostate was publicly beheaded in the streets of Constantinople. Shortly afterwards a Greek suffered death for a similar reason. These cruel acts roused the indignation of all Europe; and the stern demands of the British ambassador, Sir Stratford Canning, supported by the representatives of the other Christian powers, extorted from the Turkish government a law, that, for the future, no Christian who had declared himself a Mohammedan, and afterwards returned to his original faith, should suffer punishment for so doing.

As the next step, an imperial decree was obtained in 1847, followed by an irrevocable charter from the Sultan in 1850, by which the Protestants, or those who had received the teachings of our missionaries, were constituted a separate body, with their own civil head, and with all the rights and privileges conceded to the old Christian ecclesiastical organizations. And finally, in 1856, after the Crimean war, the Christian governments of Europe induced the Turkish government to issue a Hatti Sheriff, or fundamental, irrevocable law, abolishing forever the death penalty for religious offences, and establishing perfect religious freedom and toleration for all classes of the people of the Empire. This law, so far as it applies to the Mohammedan subjects of the Empire, has always been little better than a dead letter. No Turk, with perhaps a few exceptions directly under the eyes of foreign ambassadors or consuls, has ever changed his religion without finding himself subjected to the bitterest persecution; and recently the government has been bold enough to declare positively that the new law was never intended to apply to Mohammedans. This declaration was a concession to Moslem popular sentiment, which the authorities felt constrained to make. The new law was at variance not only with the spirit and the letter of the Koran, but with all Moslem traditions. It provoked the bitter resentment of all thorough-going Mohammedans; and, if loyally and fully adhered to, it might have endangered the very existence of the Sultan's government. After the

Crimean war, the Sultan and his advisers felt that their only hope for the future lay in a complete change of the basis of their government. It seemed to them absolutely necessary that the old theocratic principle should be abandoned, that the constitution of the Empire should be popularized, and its government made to rest equally upon all classes, Mohammedan and Christian alike. It was in the line of this revolutionary policy that the new measures were instituted. But such a thing can never be. The Sultan, so long as he reigns at all, must reign as the head of the Mohammedan faith, the successor of the Prophet, the vicegerent of God. When he ceases to hold this position in the eyes of his Moslem subjects, his authority will be gone, and his Empire will fall apart like a rope of sand. The Turkish government can never become a merely civil government like that of the other monarchies of Europe. It is far more likely, if it should ever have a man at its head capable of so energetic a policy, taking advantage of a feeble Mohammedan reaction, to appeal to the old religious feeling, strive to rekindle the old fanatical spirit, and attempt to regain the ground it has lost by re-assuming completely its ancient theocratic character. Such an attempt could have but one issue. The strength, the wealth, and the intelligence of the Empire are rapidly centring in the hands of its Christian subjects; and any such movement would only precipitate the inevitable doom.

But, while these measures have given little religious

freedom to the Turks, they have brought a great enfranchisement to the Christians. By simply enrolling himself as a Protestant, any member of those ancient churches, in most cases, secures at once not only entire religious freedom, but a great safeguard to his civil rights. As regards their Christian subjects, the Turkish officials have, as a general rule, carried out the new laws in good faith. They like the Protestants not only as being free from what they too justly stigmatize as the idolatry of the ancient churches, but for their superior virtue and honesty. Ordinarily our missionaries have had no reason to complain of a want of justice to themselves and their converts. This is partly owing to the strong protection which they are always able to command by appealing to the representatives of the Christian powers; but it is largely due also to the favorable disposition of the Turkish officials. The Turk, under ordinary circumstances, is not inclined to be a persecutor. He is friendly, hospitable, and kind; and the officers of government, when their personal interests are not concerned, are usually ready to administer justice with reasonable impartiality. But it is also true that the mass of the Turks are still but unreclaimed barbarians, and that their old ferocity may be but too easily excited, as was terribly shown in the awful massacres in Syria in 1859 and 1860.

The ancient Churches and peoples of the Greek Empire, crowded together into its ever-narrowing compass with each successive advancement of the

Mohammedan power, were at last, by the final triumph of the Turks, buried from sight and from the great activities of human life. But though buried, they were not destroyed. Beneath the heavy burden of Turkish oppression they have for four centuries awaited the dawn of a better day. That day has at last risen upon them. As the power and pretensions of the Turks have shrunk before the might of a rising Christian civilization, these ancient Churches and peoples have felt the vivifying effects of the light of knowledge and the vital breath of a living Christianity, and have begun to stir in their graves. We cannot doubt that ere long they shall stand up in newness of life. The people who have so long sat in darkness shall see great light; and, to them who have sat in the region and shadow of death, light shall spring up. The time evidently draws near when the yoke of Mohammedan oppression shall be broken from their necks, and when those fair regions, the first to be made bright by the shining of gospel truth, shall again begin to rejoice in the blessings of a pure Christianity and a Christian civilization.

Thus do we complete our brief and imperfect survey of the great Mohammedan movement. For twelve hundred years that mighty system has played a part hardly second to any other among the great agencies of human history. But its time is passed, its mission is accomplished. And now, as we dismiss it to its grave with all the buried greatnesses of the past, it only remains to inquire for what purpose it

has been suffered to exist, and to run so stupendous a career. What end has it accomplished? What great result has it wrought out in the all-comprehending plan of a divine Providence? What has it effected in promoting the accomplishment of that great result towards which the divine hand has been steadily working in all the developments of human history?

For many centuries the Mohammedan dominion stood among the mightiest powers of the earth. For many generations the nations subject to its sway were the most prosperous, most civilized, and most enlightened of the world. And yet, if we except some small and comparatively unimportant additions to scientific knowledge, and the fact that its culture subserved an important purpose in transmitting a borrowed light to the rising civilization of the West, the record of its achievements for, and contributions to, the great work of human progress is little else than a perfect blank. Not one book did it produce; not one great truth did it discover; not one institution or important idea did it originate to take its place among the permanent and valued possessions of mankind. What, then, was the mission of this mighty power? and why was such wide and enduring dominion bestowed upon it?

To this question there is but one answer. The surrendering of so large a portion of the ancient Christian world to the Mohammedan power was the giving-up of a worn-out and worthless field to the wild growth of nature. No fruit was expected from

that field until it should be again reclaimed to a Christian cultivation. And when the time comes to reclaim it, just as the forest is cleared by the woodman's axe, so shall the cumbersome growth of Mohammedanism be cleared away before the reviving power of a living Christianity.

But God is prodigal of life and activity, even in wild and desolate regions. Many a wide-spreading prairie, many a glorious landscape of hill and plain, has stood age after age, radiant with a beauty which no intelligent human eye could see and admire, and full of a vigorous and happy life, which seemed to exist for no end beyond itself. It is so in the moral world ; and when the great movements of the kingdom of God, leaving this ancient and worn-out field, turned westward to begin another stage of their development among new scenes, and upon a new theatre of action, the region thus given up was not left to utter solitude and desolation. A wild and vigorous growth was made to spring up upon this forsaken field ; barren, indeed, of any valuable and enduring fruit, but full of life and power, and clothed with a certain wild and natural beauty not unworthy of admiration.

Mohammedanism was but a wild offshoot of revealed religion, taking root and greatly flourishing in this ancient field of the Eastern Church until the time of its redemption should come, — a growth nobler and better than the corrupt and decaying

Christianity which it supplanted, and no doubt the highest and best form, both of society and of religion, which could there exist through the long and dark generations of the mediæval age.

CHAPTER XV.

ASIA MINOR.

THIS magnificent region claims our particular attention at this point, as having been for the past five hundred years the proper seat and home of the Turkish nation. In the great migrations of the middle ages, Asia Minor was so completely appropriated and resettled by the Turks, that in their own phraseology it might properly be called *Turkestan.* The other provinces of their Empire are little else than military dependencies in which few Turks are found. Here they constitute a large majority of the population ; and their language is the common speech of all classes and races.

Asia Minor is one of the most beautiful and most interesting regions of the world. Its climate is temperate and delightful, its scenery picturesque and ever varying, its soil luxuriantly fruitful in almost every product of both temperate and tropical climes. For twenty-five hundred years, from the days of Solomon to the Turkish conquest, Asia Minor was the seat of a dense population, and of a comparatively refined and luxurious civilization. The earliest dawn

of profane history reveals the Phrygians and the Lydians as already wealthy and civilized peoples; and when, in the year 559 B.C., Cyrus founded the great Persian Empire, he found the western half of Asia Minor united in the magnificent Kingdom of Crœsus, the richest monarch of the ancient world.

But Asia Minor is chiefly interesting to the student of history, as having been the cradle of the glorious civilization of Greece. Before the dawn of history, the Greeks, then a rude and barbarous race, had colonized the whole belt of seacoast forming the western border of the peninsula; and, in doing so, had acquired a new character, and become another people. Mingling freely with the more advanced natives of the country, they acquired from them refinement and culture; while the energy, the enlarged ideas and restless activity, awakened by the founding of these new settlements, developed in them something before unknown to the Greeks, — an astonishing spirit of commercial enterprise. In the course of a few generations, all the neighboring seas, even to the distant regions of France and Spain, became lined with their commercial colonies, and filled with their numberless ships. This immense trade soon brought great wealth; and with wealth came the rapid progress of civilization, art, and literary culture. These Greek colonies borrowed and perfected the music of their Asiatic neighbors. The light and graceful Ionic architecture originated among them. Homer was but the first of their long and splendid

succession of poets ; while among them, in later days, appeared Herodotus, the father of Greek historic prose. Even now the traveller gazes in astonishment upon the remains of the architecture of this wonderful people ; upon temples inimitably beautiful even in their ruins, so perfect, in their massive strength and skilful workmanship, as to defy the power of time, and helpless only against the hands of barbaric men.

Asia Minor is also a country of deepest interest to the Christian student from its intimate connection with the earliest history of the Christian Church. From "Tarsus, a city in Cilicia," sprung the great Apostle to the Gentiles. Here dwelt "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," to whom St. Peter addressed his first epistle ; here were Derbe and Lystra, Perga and Pamphylia, and a multitude of other places so familiar to us in the story of St. Paul's missionary labors ; here was Ephesus, of which the aged John was bishop when he wrote, or at least when he published, his Gospel and his epistles ; and here were the seven churches of Asia, made forever memorable by the solemn messages to them which open the sublime visions of the Apocalypse.

The country is now but the dismal wreck of its former self. The rivers which in earlier and better days were carefully kept within their banks, and thus carried harmlessly to the sea, the Turks have allowed to become choked, so that at high water they spread

themselves over the country, leaving everywhere pestilential puddles, swamps, and marshes, until the western lowlands of Asia Minor, from being one of the most healthful, as well as most fruitful and beautiful countries in the world, have become one of the most unwholesome and malarious. Intermittent fevers everywhere prevail; and, through all the summer months, a universal cry for calomel and quinine assails the ears of travellers from the yellow, jaundiced people. On his return from the interior, Mr. MacFarlane passed through the renowned and once splendid city of Nicæa, where was held the first of the great Councils of the ancient Church. What he saw there is thus told: "The café had a khan attached to it, and here in a filthy puddle we dismounted. . . . In the midst of the room, there was a pan of burning charcoal, round which were seated about a dozen turbaned Turks, the notabilities of the place, some smoking vigorously to dispel the baleful damp of night; others not having strength enough left to smoke; and all being sallow, thin, haggard, and silent. Such was the Nicæan council we saw assembled in the coffee-house, which was lighted by the flames on the hearth, and by two cresset lamps. The poor khanjee was as yellow as gold, and as thin as a ghost; he was in the hot fit of malarial fever, and could scarcely crawl, or hold up his head. His servant, or slave, was as yellow as himself; but instead of burning he was freezing, having the cold fit on him. Hot or cold, burning fever, or freezing, shaking ague, these

were the principal varieties in the physical condition of the people in this horrible swamp." In the morning "we went out into the café, and there waited till the caféjee lighted his fire, and boiled his great copper pot; and the very early rising Turks began to drop in. It was like a congregating of ghosts who had all died last night of the jaundice. In the first gray light of morning, they looked more awful than they had done over night when sitting in council round the charcoal tripod. . . . They begged we would give them something to 'cut' their fever; and we made a new distribution from our very stinted medicine-chest. The caféjee told us that the heat of summer had been greater and longer than usual, that the fever had been more terrible this year, and that a good many men, women, and children had died 'swollen,' that is to say, of dropsy."[1]

Vast reaches of the once densely peopled and still fruitful valleys and plains of Asia Minor are now a desolate wilderness in which ravenous beasts prowl for their prey; while the scanty population, oppressed, sickly, and poverty stricken, are huddled together in sparsely scattered villages and towns, their very dwellings too often tumbling to ruins over their heads.

The physical conformation of Asia Minor is very peculiar.[2] About three-fourths of the interior forms a high table-land, or plateau; not level, but intersected

[1] Turkey and its Destiny, vol. i. p. 212.

[2] See Sir Henry Rawlinson in Rawlinson's Herodotus, vol. i. "Essay II. on the Physical and Political Geography of Asia Minor."

by numerous low ranges of hills and mountains. This plateau is bounded on the north, west, and south by mountain-chains which descend precipitously to the plains lying on the coast. In the southern-central part of the plateau is a large basin with no outlet to the sea, its waters flowing into inland lakes. The strip of coast upon the south, embracing Cilicia, Pamphylia, and Lycia, is fifty or sixty miles wide, but interrupted by frequent lateral mountain ranges, some of which strike boldly down to the sea. This region is very warm, almost tropical in its climate, and in summer is, much of it, very unhealthy. The lowlands lying to the west of the great plateau form a broad belt stretching across the whole western end of the peninsula, and reaching inland in some parts nearly two hundred miles. This region is exceedingly fruitful, and was the ancient seat of Phrygian, Greek, and Lydian civilization and power. On the north, again, upon the southern coast of the Black Sea, there is another strip of lowland stretching back six hundred and fifty miles to the mountains of Armenia, and varying in breadth from forty to a hundred miles. A great part of this narrow territory is covered with dense forests; other portions are rough and rocky; while yet others, especially to the north-east in ancient Pontus, present charming landscapes of luxuriant meadows, groves, and orchards, reminding the traveller of the scenery of England.

The great plateau is some five hundred miles long from west to east, and about two hundred and fifty

miles in breadth. Being so high, it has a cool, damp climate very favorable to vegetation, and abounds in luxuriant pasturage. It is but sparsely inhabited partly by a settled population of Turks, Armenians, and Greeks, and partly by wandering shepherd tribes of Turcomans or Yerûks, of whom more hereafter. In the forests and mountains, wolves, bears, and wild boars abound. Immense flocks of sheep are here reared, which furnish the Turks with the greater part of their animal food.

The population of Asia Minor amounts to some nine or ten millions. There are six or seven millions of Mohammedans, about two and a half millions of Armenians, and one million of Greeks. The common people of Asia Minor make use of comparatively little animal food. Their principal dishes are a pilaff of boiled rice or wheat, and various preparations of milk. Of these, the most important is *yoghûrt*. This is a chief article of their diet, and is said to be, when properly made, both wholesome and palatable. It is new milk, boiled until rather thick, and then curdled with rennet or an admixture of old yoghûrt. *Kaïmack* is another and richer preparation of milk. To prepare this the new milk is simmered until a thick scum is formed, and then left to stand for cream. Kaïmack is the scum and cream taken off together. Another article of food, on which the common people depend greatly in winter, is called *tarkhana*. To prepare it, they keep a quantity of milk until quite sour, then boil it, stirring in coarsely ground wheat until

the meal cakes, and also cornel berries, which give the preparation a purple tinge. The cake is broken into small pieces, thoroughly dried in the sun, and finally grated into a coarse flour which retains its acidity, and will keep a long time. Soup thickened with this flour is a principal article of winter food.

The lowlands of Asia Minor everywhere abound in delicious grapes. The juice of these grapes is employed not so much for wine, as in making *pekmez*, — the same article which is known in Syria as *dibs*. This is a rich sirup, deemed indispensable in every well-to-do household, produced by boiling down the unfermented must, and poured liberally over other articles of food.

It is a singular fact, that, throughout Asia Minor and Armenia, hay as an article of winter food for cattle is almost unknown. Hardly any thing is given to the horses, horned cattle, and sheep, through the winter, but the finely broken straw of the threshing-floor. The consequence is that before spring they become very thin. In the latter part of winter, almost the only meat afforded by the butchers' shops of Brûsa and the other large towns of Asia Minor is the flesh of lean, half-starved sheep. In some parts of the interior, however, a little miserable hay is gathered, which is piled in diminutive stacks upon the roofs of the houses. This hay is really, as it is esteemed, poorer fodder than straw, and is only used for want of the latter. But better methods of agriculture, and improved implements, are slowly

making their way into Asia Minor, especially through the influence and friendly offices of our missionaries, among the Protestant Christians. Mowers, reapers, grist-mills, steam-engines, clocks, saws, and stoves, with almost every kind of mechanic's tool and agricultural implement, are among the articles constantly ordered from the mission stations; a fact which strikingly illustrates the greatness and the comprehensiveness of the elevating and civilizing work which our missionary operations are effecting for Asiatic Turkey.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LAZ AND THE TURCOMANS.

THE Laz[1] are a Mohammedan tribe, found numerously about the south-east corner of the Black Sea, from Trebizond to the River Phasis. They are a rude, seafaring people, the poorest, basest, and least important of all the races of Asia Minor. Yet they are a tribe of great antiquity, and have figured in history for two thousand years. In the earliest times their ancestors inhabited the northern districts of ancient Colchis; in the sixth century of the Christian era they had spread over the whole of that country, forming a petty kingdom, tributary sometimes to the Romans, and sometimes to the Persians. They belong to the Georgian race, pronounced by Gibbon the most dissolute of mankind, — a heavy charge, but richly deserved by a people who have been accustomed, from time immemorial, to sell their own children, both male and female, to the slave-merchants of the south and west.

The Turcomans, or Yerûks, are a branch of the great Turkish family, who still retain their primitive

[1] Brace's Ethnology, p. 197; Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. iv. p. 230.

habits, and lead a wandering shepherd life. Their migration into the territories now belonging to the Turkish Empire dates back about seven hundred years. They dwell in tents, and keep themselves entirely aloof from the settled population. They are a vigorous, thriving race, with a spirit unbroken by servitude, and are not to be lightly oppressed or wronged. They are tall and athletic ; but, with their high cheek-bones and sunken eyes, their features are not pleasing. Few other races are more sufficient to themselves, more independent of the rest of mankind, than the Turcomans. Their women make in abundance the coarse thick cloth required for their tents and clothing ; their food is chiefly furnished by their flocks and herds. They make little use of money, except to hoard it in secret repositories, but barter their wool and sheep, in the neighboring fairs, for the few things which they need beyond what they can provide for themselves. They sell much, and buy little, so that their chiefs sometimes grow very rich in buried treasures of silver and gold. They are well armed, and have little to do with the local authorities, except to pay a specified tribute. In religion, they are very zealous Mohammedans, though very ignorant of the Koran and its teachings, and in no wise strict in their ceremonial observances. As a rule, they are reasonably honest in their mode of life, and are rarely guilty of robbery or theft. Mr. Layard gives them a very high character in this respect. He says, "I have met few men who exceed in honesty and fidelity

the descendants of the pure Turcoman race, scattered over Asia Minor and the districts watered by the Tigris." [1] They are very hospitable, and present a fine illustration of the ancient patriarchal mode of life. Their encampments are found in all parts of the great plateau of Asia Minor, and so eastward to the borders of China. The more eastern tribes, however, are of a fiercer and more turbulent character, and are more inclined to robbery.

As the traveller passes eastward from Brûsa, and begins to rise to the highlands of the great plateau, he will be sure to reach very soon some beautiful, secluded valley, with a little encampment of these Yerûk shepherds. The venerable chief, the very image of Abraham as he sat in his tent-door in the heat of the day, sits quietly smoking his pipe in the open front of his large tent, which no man, whether prince or beggar, is allowed to pass without stopping to share its hospitality. As the travellers approach, the whole encampment is alert to receive and entertain them. Pipes are presented, and gravely smoked in silence; and then follows an abundant and wholesome repast. First there is the universal pilaff of boiled rice or wheat, sometimes mixed with grated cheese. Then will follow a huge bowl of excellent *yoghûrt*, with good sweet bread fresh from the rude oven of heated stones. These simple viands disposed of, pipes are again presented, and preparation is made for coffee. The chief takes a handful of berries from

[1] Nineveh and Babylon, p. 147.

a bag; a ready shepherd places them in an iron pan, burns them before the eyes of the party, and then at once grinds them while still hot and fragrant. Upon the coffee thus prepared hot water is poured; it is made to boil rapidly for a few moments, and then served without sugar. The traveller, delighted and refreshed, will probably give an emphatic indorsement to the testimony of Mr. MacFarlane upon a similar occasion: "That coffee under the Yerûk tent was better than any I ever tasted in any mansion in England; its flavor was exquisite; one tiny cup of it was more reviving to the spirits than a goblet of the best wine. Let not the reader dream about Mocha; the berries were the common West Indian or Brazilian, which we use or misuse in England." [1]

The Yerûks lead an easy, cheerful life; sometimes staying for a week or fortnight in a place where pasturage is abundant and good, and then passing leisurely on, at the rate of five or six miles a day, to other encampments. Some of the clans descend, late in the autumn, to the southern lowlands, where they pass the winter in semi-subterranean dwellings, similar to those so common in Armenia.

[1] Turkey and its Destiny, vol. i. p. 156.

CHAPTER XVII.

KÛRDISTAN AND THE KÛRDS.

IF we start from Smyrna, and pass directly east upon a line drawn lengthwise through Asia Minor a little south of its centre, cross the Euphrates where it makes its great horse-shoe bend from a westerly to a southerly course, and also the extreme upper waters of the Tigris, we shall come, upon the south-eastern borders of Armenia, to Lake Van, a small inland sea, some fifty miles in length by twenty-five in breadth, and having no outlet to the ocean.

South-east from Lake Van stretch the tremendous mountains of Kûrdistan. The Tigris forms the south-western boundary of Kûrdistan, while its eastern limit, as far south as the latitude of Mosul, is the mountain chain of which the Zagros is a continuation, and which separates Turkey from Persia. Farther south Kûrdistan extends into Persia, and embraces the territories of the Vali of Sinna, a powerful prince tributary to the Shah of Persia. The whole region extends in length from north-west to south-east, about three hundred and fifty miles, and has an average width of about one hundred and fifty miles.

Kûrdistan is one vast knot of lofty, precipitous, and almost impassable mountains. From the central summits of Jelu, which tower from fourteen to fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, the country stretches in every direction, to quote the language of Mr. Layard, "a perfect sea of mountains." The waters of Lake Van are seen a hundred miles to the north, while at the same distance to the south-west appear the boundless plains of Mesopotamia. But, wild and rugged as the country is, it is not ill adapted to support, as it always has supported from the earliest times, a comparatively large and flourishing population. Far up among the mountains is found excellent and abundant pasturage, while the crowded peaks descend everywhere almost perpendicularly into narrow but fruitful valleys, which can be reached only by difficult and dangerous paths. In passing from one valley to another, the traveller must scale the steep mountain's side, and thread the brink of giddy precipices so lofty and perpendicular, that, while he sees the foaming torrent far below him, the sound of its waters cannot reach his ears.

The streams which dash and roar through these gorges of the mountains join their waters, forming several large rivers. The most important of these, beginning upon the south, are the Lesser Zab, the Greater Zab, and the Khabour, all flowing into the Tigris.

The southern districts are somewhat less rugged; and the valleys, broader and more fertile, not only

abound in delicious fruits, but yield ample crops of grain.

The deep secluded valleys of eastern central Kûrdistan are the seat of that singular and interesting people, the Mountain Nestorians, the tragic events in whose recent history have given both them and their Kûrdish enemies a painful notoriety throughout the civilized world.

In the very highest mountain pastures of central Kûrdistan, nine thousand feet above the sea, Mr. Layard found another people hardly less singular and interesting than the Mountain Nestorians. It was a small tribe of nomadic, shepherd Jews, a relic of some forced migration of ancient date. While passing over the mountains from Bash Kalah to Van, Mr. Layard came upon a large encampment. "The flocks had been driven down from the higher pastures, and were gathered together to be milked before the black tents. A party of women already crouched round their sheep. Their long hair was platted in tresses ending in tassels, mingled with gold coins. From a high turban of gay colors, also adorned with coins, a thin white veil fell over their shoulders; and their flowing garments were of bright silk. The children ran to and fro with wooden bowls; and a girl standing near sung a plaintive air, beating the measure on a tambourine. The features of the women, and of the men who came out of their tents as we rode up, as well as the tongue in which they addressed one another, showed at once that they were not Kûrds. They were Jews,

shepherds and wanderers, of the stock, it may be, of those who with their high priest Hyrcanus were carried away captive from Jerusalem in the second century before our era, and placed in the city and neighborhood of Van. . . . We encamped near the Jewish nomades; and I visited their tents, but could learn nothing of their history. They fed their flocks as their fathers had done before them in these hills, and paid taxes to the governor of Bash Kalah. There were many other families, keepers of sheep like themselves, scattered over the mountains; they were shepherds again as they had been when they were an abomination to the Egyptians."[1]

The native Moslem population of Kûrdistan is of two distinct races; the Kûrds proper, and the Gûrans. The former are a set of high-spirited, warlike mountaineers, exceedingly clannish in their habits, very barbarous and ferocious, most of them, but one of the noblest races of the East. The Gûrans are less warlike, are not at all clannish in their social order, and are altogether an inferior race. In Turkish Kûrdistan they are found only in the southern districts, where they form a helpless and greatly oppressed peasant class, cultivating the soil for the lordly clansmen. In Persian Kûrdistan, on the other hand, they are the dominant race, the Vali of Sinna being himself a Gûran.

There can be no doubt that the Kûrds are a very ancient race, and that they have held their country

[1] Nineveh and Babylon, p. 331.

for twenty-five hundred years with little admixture of foreign elements. When Xenophon passed through Kûrdistan with his ten thousand Greeks in his famous retreat, four hundred years before Christ, he found the inhabitants, then called Carduchi, precisely the same as their descendants have always remained. "They lived among the mountains, were very warlike, and did not obey the king. On one occasion a royal army of one hundred and twenty thousand men had penetrated into their country, whence, from the impracticability of the ground, not one of them returned. But, whenever they made a treaty with the satrap of the plain, some of them had intercourse with the Carduchi, and some of the Carduchi with them."[1] Kûrdish tribes are found scattered through all the neighboring regions. The whole nation, including the Gûrans, numbers somewhere from two and a half to four millions.

The Kûrds proper of Turkish Kûrdistan number something like a million of souls. While owning a nominal allegiance, first to the Saracen Caliphs, and afterwards to the Turkish Sultans, they have remained, until the late conquest of their country by the Turks, as essentially independent as their ancient ancestors were of the great King. They are most zealous Mohammedans, fierce, turbulent, and truculent, robbing and plundering with every opportunity, and valuing the life of a man little higher than that of a dog. "They have no sort of scruple about killing a man,

[1] Anabasis, Book III. Chap. v. sect. 16.

but would not miss a prayer for the world, though they have been known to fight in the mosque. Many years ago there was a quarrel between two districts about a dog, in which seventy persons were killed on the spot, of whom thirty fell in a mosque after they had joined together in public worship. They still fight at intervals about this same quarrel; and no encounter takes place without the slaughter of some men. There is a Khoshnav chief, now alive, whose name I forget. A fly once settled in his eye, and teased him: he drove it off; the insect returned two or three times; and at last the Kûrd, getting into a fury, struck himself in the eye with his khanjar, or dagger, blinded himself of one eye, and was nearly killed."[1] But with all their ferocity they display many fine qualities, and are a truly noble race. They show the superiority of their Japhetic or Indo-European blood, being neither Arabs, Tartars, nor Assyrians, but of the kindred of their ancient neighbors the Medes. They are frank, generous, and hospitable, tenderly attached, not only like the Turks to their children, but to their wives; and, nearly alone among the peoples of the East, they accord to their women an almost Western equality. They bear a striking resemblance to the old Scottish Highlanders; and while reading the story of their fierce and sturdy independence, their incessant and bloody feuds, their plundering, freebooting habits, their clannish devotion, and high regard for their women, one can hardly help

[1] Rich's Residence in Kûrdistan, vol. i. p. 150.

fancying himself among those old marauding, sanguinary clans, of which such graphic pictures are placed before us in the prose and poetry of Sir Walter Scott.

"Each valley, each sequestered glen,
Mustered its little horde of men,
That met as torrents from the height
In highland dells their streams unite;
Still gathering as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood
By hundreds, prompt for blows and blood;
Each trained to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath but by his chieftain's hand,
No law but Rhoderick Dhu's command." [1]

The intensely clannish spirit of the Kûrds is well illustrated in the following passage from Mr. Rich: "Darishmana is a small village in Pizhder, and was the ancient seat of the Bebbehs, the family of Mahmoud Pasha. The present inhabitants of the village are all of that family, or rather that family is from them; and they give themselves proportionable airs. Some of them now and then visit Sulimania; on which occasion old Abdurrahman Pasha, the father of Mahmoud, used to humor his highland cousins, and send them back with some present suitable to their wants and condition. In his presence they used to affect great familiarity, and even superiority as the elder branch. A fellow who had perhaps come to

[1] The Lady of the Lake, Canto III. xxiv. See also the introduction to Rob Roy.

Sulimania driving an ass would sit down with the pasha before he was asked, draw forth an old, short, dirty tobacco-pipe, fill it, strike himself a light, and, regaling himself with a few whiffs, ask the pasha, 'Well, cousin, and how are you?'"[1]

Respecting the dress and personal appearance of the ruder Kûrds of the North, Mr. Layard is our best authority: "The Kûrds of Fundûk wear the Bohtan dress in its full perfection, — a turban nearly three feet in diameter, shalwars or trousers of enormous width, loose embroidered jackets, and shirt-sleeves sweeping the ground; all being striped deep, dull red and black, except the underlinen and one kerchief tied diagonally across the turban, which is generally of bright yellow."[2]

On his first journey through the Kûrdish Mountains, in 1846, Mr. Layard met with Abd-ul-Summit Bey, Chief of Kûmri or Gûmri, in the district of Berwar, whose appearance is thus described: "An hour afterwards, shuffling over the housetops at the great risk of his shins, and with a good chance of disappearing down a chimney, came the bey. He was enveloped in a variety of cloaks; he wore, after the manner of the Bohtan chiefs, a turban of huge dimensions, about four feet in diameter, made up of numberless handkerchiefs, and rags of every hue of red, yellow, and black; his jacket and wide trousers were richly embroidered; and in his girdle were all manner of weapons. In person he was tall and handsome; his

[1] Residence in Kûrdistan, vol. i. p. 291. [2] Nineveh and Babylon, p. 43.

eyes were dark, his nose aquiline, and his beard black; but the expression of his face was far from prepossessing." [1] Passing on to the north, they fell in, a few days afterwards, with another Kûrdish dignitary, who proved to be no less a personage than the chief lieutenant of Nûrûlah Bey. The appearance and conduct of this worthy are thus described: "In front, on a small, lean, and jaded horse, rode a tall, gaunt figure, dressed in all the tawdry garments sanctioned by Kûrdish taste. A turban of wonderful capacity, and almost taking within its dimensions horse and rider, buried his head, which seemed to escape by a miracle being driven in between his shoulders by the enormous pressure. From the centre of this mass of many-colored rags, rose a high, conical hat of white felt. This load appeared to give an unsteady, rolling gait to the thin carcass below, which could with difficulty support it. A most capacious pair of claret-colored trousers bulged out from the sides of the horse, and well nigh stretched from side to side of the ravine. Every shade of red and yellow was displayed in his embroidered jacket and cloak; and in his girdle were weapons of extraordinary size and most fanciful workmanship. His eyes were dark and piercing, and overshadowed by shaggy eyebrows; his nose aquiline, his cheeks hollow, his face long, and his beard black and bushy. Notwithstanding the ferocity of his countenance, and its unmistakable expression of villany, it would

[1] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 151.

have been difficult to repress a smile at the absurdity of the figure, and the disparity between it and the miserable animal concealed beneath. . . . I saluted the *mutesellim* as we elbowed each other in the narrow pass ; but he did not seem inclined to return my salutation otherwise than by a curl of the lip, and an indistinct grunt. . . . It was no use quarrelling with him, so I passed on."[1]

The Kûrds proper are of two classes, — the Kuzzelbash, or settled Kûrds, who live in towns and villages ; and the Kochers, who are wandering shepherd tribes, roving up and down among the mountains with their flocks, and dwelling in tents. Both these classes are divided into clans, each with its own petty chief ; and, before the late conquest of the mountains by the Turks, these clans were united into larger tribes under the leadership of six or seven great families, the heads of which had most of them held their high position for a long time with the rank of pasha, under the Turkish government.

The foremost of the great Kûrdish chiefs, thirty years ago, was the famous Bedir Khan Bey, chief of Bûhtan, the north-western district of Kûrdistan, lying between Lake Van and the Tigris. The capital of the Bûhtan chiefs had long been the ancient city of Jezireh, situated upon an island in the Tigris. But fear of the Turks had led Bedir Khan Bey to remove his residence to the mountain village of Dergûleh, eighteen miles inland. At this place he built a strong

[1] Idem, p. 177.

and imposing castle ; and here Dr. Grant visited him in 1843, just as he was setting forth upon his terrible expedition against the Mountain Nestorians, and was kindly and hospitably received. The Bûhtan chief was young, able, and ambitious, and aimed at nothing less than entire independence of the Turks, and the union, under his leadership, of the whole of Kûrdistan.

Next in power and influence to Bedir Khan Bey, was Nûrûlah Bey (spelled also Nûr Ullah Bey, and Nûr Ali Bey), chief of the Hakkary tribes, whose territory lies east of Bûhtan, north of the Mountain Nestorians, and in immediate connection with them. The Hakkary tribes are among the rudest and fiercest of all the Kûrds ; and from time immemorial they have lived in almost constant warfare with their Christian neighbors. Bedir Khan Bey was commonly spoken of as "the Bey." Nûrûlah Bey claimed to be superior to his rival in rank and dignity, boasting his descent from the Caliphs of Bagdad, and was usually called "the Emir." He had acquired an unenviable notoriety, a few years before, by the treacherous murder of Dr. Schultz, a German traveller, who had been one of the first Europeans to penetrate those secluded mountains. It was a dark and evil deed ; but, under the circumstances, need have occasioned no surprise. Schultz travelled with much pomp and a great deal of baggage, gave rich presents to the chiefs, took notes and specimens of all that he saw, and openly avowed himself the agent of a

European sovereign. It was very natural that the jealous Kûrds should regard him as a spy sent to explore their mines in the interest of a foreign power, and as such should be incited to take his life. Dr. Grant frequently visited Nûrûlah Bey as his physician, and was treated by him not only with great kindness, but with an honest and manly confidence. In the social circle of his castle, where (strangest of all things in the East) the ladies sat in free and dignified converse with their husbands, brothers, and sons, Dr. Grant felt *at home* as never elsewhere among Mohammedans.[1]

Since the terrible slaughter of the Nestorians, Bedir Khan Bey and Nûrûlah Bey have been generally regarded as bloodthirsty monsters, hardly deserving the human name. It is to be observed, however, that the judgment of our missionaries in the neighborhood, as well as of most judicious writers familiar with the circumstances, is much less severe. We must remember, that, among such wild and fierce mountaineers, conflicts like these are in the usual course of events. But for the peculiar and malignant fury inspired by religious hatred, this catastrophe might be matched by many an event in the history of Scotland. The Mountain Nestorians were just as brave, warlike, fierce, and aggressive, just as "prompt to blows and blood," as their Kûrdish neighbors. The Kûrds outnumbered them nine to one; but, in their constant and irreconcilable dissensions, the

[1] See *Dr. Grant and the Mountain Nestorians*, p. 274.

Nestorians were safe, and always able to hold their own. The northern valleys of the Nestorians were within the territories of Nûrûlah Bey, and he claimed from them a regular tribute. This tribute they sometimes paid, if it was asked for politely enough; sometimes they coolly took the emir's officials, and cut off their heads. But from 1840 to 1843 occurred a peculiar conjunction of circumstances most unfortunate for the Nestorians.

In the first place, Mar Shimon the Nestorian Patriarch, with an ambition far greater than his ability and sagacity, conceived the idea of making himself and his community entirely independent of the Kûrdish chiefs. This of course exasperated Nûrûlah Bey, who regarded part of the Nestorian territory as his own.

In the second place, there were jealousies and dissensions in the family of the emir himself, which tended to imbitter him still more against the Nestorians. The predecessor of Nûrûlah Bey was his brother. But Suleiman Bey, the son and heir apparent of the old emir, being at his death but a beardless youth, Nûrûlah had succeeded to the chieftaincy. The new emir had not the power, perhaps had no desire, to destroy his nephew; but the latter remained nevertheless the head of an opposing party, and a troublesome man. The old emir had been a personal friend of Mar Shimon, and had lived on terms of unusual amity with his Christian neighbors. This spirit and policy were inherited by Suleiman Bey, who maintained a close friendship with the Patriarch.

This circumstance proved in the end most unfortunate for the Nestorians.

In the third place, it was a fact of ill omen to them, that at this time Bedir Khan Bey and Nûrûlah Bey, who swayed between them the whole power of northern Kûrdistan, were in close alliance, and animated by the same fanatical Moslem spirit, the same deadly hostility to their Christian neighbors.

Finally and chiefly, the Turks, who could ill brook the existence within their own borders of a Christian people living in a condition of defiant independence, used every means to instigate the Kûrdish chiefs to undertake the enterprise which they had always found wholly beyond their own power, — to conquer or destroy the hated Nestorians.

Accordingly, when in 1843 Dr. Grant visited Bedir Khan Bey at Dergûleh, he found the confederate chiefs ready to start upon their expedition. The story of the terrible scenes which followed belongs properly to the history of the Nestorians. It is enough to say here, that the Kûrds were successful; that the Nestorians were found unprepared for resistance, disunited, and without a leader; and that with awful carnage the subjugation of their fair valleys was effected.

Bedir Khan Bey and Nûrûlah Bey had thus willingly permitted themselves to be used as the cat's-paws of the Turks; but their own turn came very soon. Their independence was a thing hardly less hateful to the Turks than that of the Nestorians.

The Kûrds were fanatical Mohammedans of the old school; and, hating bitterly the so-called liberal and reforming policy of the Turkish government, they openly denounced and defied it. The intriguing Turks were thus able to accomplish a second end. Gladly taking advantage of the cry of horror which came up from all Christendom at the atrocities of the Kûrds, the Porte sent the best part of its new, disciplined army to punish its own agents for doing faithfully its own work. These troops, however inefficient against the armies of Europe, were more than a match for the divided, undisciplined Kûrds. Partly by craft and intrigue, and partly by force, the end was attained. The Turks penetrated the mountain defiles, besieged Bedir Khan Bey and Nûrûlah Bey in their strongholds, took them prisoners, and consigned them to a distant exile in the islands of the Mediterranean. Thus fell the ancient independence of Kûrdistan; and now, throughout all its borders, the chiefs of the clans pay their tribute, and acknowledge their allegiance, to pashas appointed by the Porte.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SOUTHERN KÛRDISTAN.

THE three southern provinces of Turkish Kûrdistan lay below the southern limits of the ancient independent country of the Carduchi, and were included in the Empire of the Persians. These three provinces were Amadia upon the north-west, Rowandûz (written also Rahwandûz and Rowandiz) upon the north-east, adjoining the territories of modern Persia, and, farther south, the beautiful country formerly belonging to the Pashas of Sulimania. The dominant class in all these provinces are genuine Kûrds, who maintained an essential independence of the Turks until within the past forty years.

Amadia is an ancient city, as old, probably, as the Empire of the Medes. Before it passed under the blighting power of the Turks, it was a large and flourishing place of two thousand houses. It was the centre of a beautiful, fruitful, and populous district; and its chiefs, connected by descent, like Nûrûlah Bey, with the Caliphs of Bagdad, lived in great state and dignity, being looked up to with religious respect by the whole Kûrdish race. The condition of the

whole district of Amadia in the days of its independence may be inferred from Mr. Layard's account of a single secluded village, which, up to the time of his visit in 1846, had escaped the rapacity of the Turks. "The chief, whose hut was in the midst of this group of single dwellings, was absent; but his wife received me with hospitality. Carpets, the work of her own women, were spread under a mulberry-tree; and large bowls of milk and cream, wooden platters filled with boiled rice, slices of honeycomb, and baskets of new-gathered fruit, were speedily placed before us. The men sat at a respectful distance, and readily gave me such information as I asked for. The women, unembarrassed by the veil, brought straw to our horses, or ran to and fro with their pitchers. Their hair fell in long tresses down their backs; and their foreheads were adorned with rows of coins and beads: many were not unworthy of the reputation for beauty which the women of Missouri enjoy.

"The spot was rich in natural beauty. The valley, shut in by lofty rocks, was well wooded with fruit-trees, — the mulberry, the peach, the fig, the walnut, the olive, and the pomegranate. Beneath them sprang the vine, or were laid out plats of Indian corn, sesame, and cotton. The sheds were built of boughs; and the property of the owners — carpets, horse-cloths, and domestic utensils — were spread out before them. From almost every door, mingled with the grass and flowers, stretched the many-colored threads of the loom, at which usually sat one female of the family. There

was a cleanliness, and even richness, in the dresses of both women and men, an appearance of comfort and industry, which contrasted strikingly with the miserable state of the people of the plain, and proved that these Kûrds had been sufficiently fortunate to escape the notice of the last governor of Mosul, and were reserved for some more scrutinizing Pasha." [1]

Such had been the condition of the whole district; but to this fair scene, as usual, the Turks had come with a destroying blight. When Dr. Grant and his companions passed through Amadia three years before, they found its wretched population of some two hundred families plunged in depths of poverty and misery of which their previous experience of even Turkish oppression had given them no idea. The whole city was tumbling to ruin; not one comfortable lodging-place could be found in its whole circuit; and the population of the whole valley, but a few years before so numerous, industrious, prosperous, and happy, now appeared sickly, poverty-stricken, and woe-begone in the last degree.

Rowandûz, until it surrendered to the Turks in 1836, had been, for a long time, an important seat of Kûrdish power. The last independent chief of Rowandûz was the terrible Mohammed Kûr Bey, who had made himself master of a large part of Southern Kûrdistan, and whose merciless ravages were extended far and wide in all directions. In the stern fanaticism of his Mohammedanism, Kûr Bey has had few

[1] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 138.

equals even among the Kûrds. All unbelievers who came under his power felt the full weight of his terrible hand. The poor Yezidees, in particular, were robbed and slaughtered without mercy. Yet Kûr Bey was not only respected, but beloved, by his own people. His justice at home was as relentless as his conquests abroad; so that quiet and security reigned throughout his dominions. "For woe betide the man who picked up an article on the road, however valuable, or however long it had lain there, unless he was the owner. He monopolized the gall-nuts[1] of his province, receiving two-thirds of the crop as his share, and ordered two men, who had gathered theirs without paying him his quota, each to lose an arm. Even a *moollah* with whom some twenty-five nuts were found was fined sixty dollars. One of his own servants had eaten a bowl of stolen *yoghûrt*, and yet denied the theft: the sword of the terrible chief at once laid bare the stolen property, and inflicted a terrible punishment on the offender. One of the last things he did before his surrender was to put out the eyes of a faithful friend who came to warn him of his danger. But besides being the bearer of evil tidings, which, in the East, is a heinous offence, he had left his post without orders, and therefore he found no mercy. His master is dead; but this chief still lives, a monument of the terrible reign of Mohammed Kûr Bey of Ravendûz."[2]

[1] The gall-nut-bearing oak abounds all through the Kûrdish Mountains; and its produce is an important article of export.

[2] Dr. Grant and the Mountain Nestorians, p. 221.

This passage gives us a good idea of the savage yet impartial justice of this famous chief. In all cases, he adhered relentlessly to the letter of the Mohammedan law, cutting off a hand for the first theft, the other for a second, and the head for a third. "Dr. Grant found evidence of his strictness in three successive guides, each blind of an eye." The incessant and murderous ravages of Kûr Bey, carried far, not only beyond the Tigris into Mesopotamia, but over the Zagros Mountains, into Persia, at length roused both the Turks and the Persians to a common effort for his destruction. In 1836 the Persian governor of Aderbijan was sent against him on the one hand, and Reschid Pasha of Mosul, on the other. Unable to stand against this united force, he surrendered to the Turks. He was sent a prisoner to Constantinople; and, two years later, "a cup of coffee, prepared according to order, relieved the government from all further apprehension." [1]

As already stated, Southern Kûrdistan extends beyond the Zagros Mountains into Persia, embracing the territories of the Vali of Sinna, who, with the great majority of his subjects, belongs to the unclannish Gûrans, — a race entirely distinct from the Kûrds proper, and found in the southern districts of Turkish Kûrdistan, only as a class of unwarlike and oppressed peasants. Mr. Rich visited the Vali of Sinna, in 1820, and found him a prince of no little power and magnificence. His palaces and gardens, really beauti-

[1] Id., p. 221.

ful and luxurious, were arranged in the highest style of Persian art; and every thing betokened a degree of civilization and refinement to which the Turkish Kûrds were strangers. Aman Ullah Khan, the Vali of Sinna, was a man of great force of character, and an imperious will, but without either intelligence or dignity. He was, moreover, a terrible tyrant, having all the brutal ferocity of Mohammed Kûr Bey of Rowandûz, without his justice.[1]

We need give no further attention to this brutal prince and his Gûran subjects, except as we pause to notice the well-founded suggestion of Mr. Rich, that the Gûrans were probably the original inhabitants of the country, who were subdued by the invading Kûrds. If this suggestion is correct, it gives the Gûrans a new interest in our eyes. They must be a remnant of the Ancient Assyrians, or, at least, of the people who occupied these regions under the Assyrian Kings. The Assyrians, whose energy and military prowess founded and upheld for six hundred years the mightiest Empire which the world had then seen, were the inhabitants of a comparatively small district, having its centre not far from the present city of Mosul, and including Southern Kûrdistan. It was while the Assyrian power was at its height, that the great Medo-Persian emigration from the

[1] "All the morning, he was busy *settling accounts* with Banna. He pulled out the eyes of three of the principal men of this part of the country, and sent off their wives and daughters, with those of some other considerable persons, to Sinna. . . . The more we hear of him, the more disgusted are we with this monster." — *Residence in Kûrdistan*, vol. i. p. 248.

banks of the Indus filled Northern Persia, Media, and Kûrdistan with a new Indo-European or Japhetic people, before whose superior power the Semitic Empires of Nineveh and Babylon were destined to go down. The Kûrds are a branch of the Median race; and there would seem to be no doubt that we see in the Gûrans a remnant of the old Assyrian people subdued by them in Southern Kûrdistan.

It is a singular fact, that the Gûrans are as distinct from the Kûrds proper, in both race and religion, as the Sudras of India are from the Brahmans. They are not Mohammedans, but profess a religion, which, like that of the Yezidees, is a medley of all the doctrines that have ever prevailed in those regions. As with the Yezidees also, the chief objects of their worship are certain saints of their own. So strongly marked are the Judaistic elements in their religious system, that Sir Henry Rawlinson is inclined to connect them with the captive Jews who were located in this region by the Assyrian conquerors.[1]

We come now to the last and most interesting district of Kûrdistan, the old Pashalic of Sulimania, where Mr. Rich, then the agent of the British Government at Bagdad, spent the summer of 1820, and of which he has left us a most instructive and intensely interesting account. This district lies in the extreme south of Kûrdistan, below the southern limits of that country as it is usually laid down on the maps; the city of Sulimania being situated in latitude 35° 34′,

[1] See the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. ix. part i. p. 36.

and longitude east from Greenwich, 45° 25′. It is a beautiful region of wood-covered hills and fruitful valleys, abounding in orchards, gardens, and delicious fruits. At the time of Mr. Rich's visit, it was comparatively wealthy and prosperous. But the chief interest of Sulimania was in the higher class of its inhabitants, who were the glory of the Kûrdish race. They had felt the power of whatever civilizing influences the East could afford, and displayed not only a degree of refinement and social culture to which no other class of the Kûrds proper have ever attained, but a simplicity, frankness, and nobleness of character well worthy of admiration. Mr. Rich does not hesitate to pronounce them a class of people such as he had never before met, had never expected to meet, in the East. They were intensely clannish; and whenever, as often happened, the reigning Pasha was deposed, and another man from another branch of the same family was elevated in his room, the personal adherents of the old Pasha would at once give up every thing cheerfully, and with unconquerable devotion, follow their master, and the head of their family, to exile, poverty, suffering, and even to death.

Mahmoud Pasha, the chief of Sulimania, was a very remarkable man. Of small size, and gentle, almost effeminate, temper, with too little sternness and ruggedness for a Kûrdish governor, he was a man of transparent honesty and uprightness, and seemingly of a deep and true piety, exercising always a simple trust in God, and acting, in all things, under a deep

sense of responsibility to him, — a truly God-fearing man of the Old-Testament, Judaistic type. One or two incidents mentioned by Mr. Rich will place these characteristics of Mahmoud Pasha in a clear light. "The Pasha was with me this evening. He is certainly, without exception, the most unaffected and practically pious Mohammedan I ever knew. He told me an anecdote to-night, not in praise of himself, but simply as narrating a fact illustrative of the advantage of placing our confidence in God, which is highly characteristic. I will endeavor to give it as nearly as possible in his own words. It would lose much, were it told in any other than his own simple and *scriptural* idiom. 'During the time I was a hostage at Kermanshah for the fidelity of my late father, he was obliged by circumstances to adopt the Turkish interests. My life was consequently forfeited; and the Shahzadeh sent for me to put me to death. It was night. I was brought before him with my arms tied behind my back. The prince was sitting in his hall: lighted candles were in the middle of it; and the executioner stood by, ready to perform his office on me. Many a man who would face death in the field of honor would shrink at being brought up, with his hands bound, before the executioner. It was a fearful sight, — may God never show it to you! — and I own my courage forsook me. In my agony, however, I had presence of mind left to call upon the name of the Lord; and, praised be his name! it was instantly revealed to me. I felt it strike on my heart as if the

following words had been impressed on it: "Am not I he who brought thee out of thy mother's womb, and protected thee, through all dangers, to the present hour? Might I not have destroyed thee at any moment? Therefore why fearest thou now? Can this man do aught against thee, except by my will?" At that instant I felt comfort; my heart gained strength; and I stood before the prince fearless and undaunted. Blessed be God! instead of causing me to be put to death, as had been his firm resolve when he sent for me, the prince only remanded me back to prison, and nothing more was done to me.'"[1]

Mr. Rich's last interview with the Pasha is thus described: "The Pasha came to me this evening for the last time. . . . The discourse gradually fell on the state of the country, and the unhappy dissensions in his family. . . . He has a great natural softness and humility of character, with something of melancholy and despondence. He has carefully cultivated the passive submission inculcated by his degrading superstition, which I cannot bear to call religion; and I found that he had an inherent diffidence with respect to himself, and an inveterate disposition to be subservient to some one. . . . He afterwards mentioned his wish to abdicate. I told him he was bound to fulfil the duties of the station to which God had called him. 'No doubt,' said he: 'yet I cannot help wondering how God was pleased to make me a governor.' — 'For the benefit of so many

[1] Residence, &c., vol. i. p. 144.

thousands of people,' said I. 'Alas,' he replied, 'then what an account shall I have to give at the last day!' I disagreed with him, and said, what was really true, that his disposition was always kind and beneficent towards every one; and that it was inseparable from the nature of all human affairs, that some abuses might exist in his government, which he either was unacquainted with, or could not prevent. 'Listen, Bey,' said he very solemnly: 'man is judged by his actions, and not by his intentions. For all the abuses that have taken place in my government, I alone shall have to answer before the judgment-seat.' . . .

"After a very interesting conversation of an hour and a half, the Pasha rose to take his leave. When he bade me adieu, his voice faltered; and his hand trembled as it pressed mine. I was equally grieved to part with him. He hopes to see me again. I fear we shall meet no more. It is hard to part even with an indifferent person for the last time; but to separate from one you esteem is bitter. Mahmoud Pasha is indeed a very estimable man, and I shall always think of him with affection. His very countenance is indicative of purity, of candor, and simplicity. I never expected to meet with such a man in the East. I fear many such are not to be met with in better climes. There is a melancholy and a tenderness in his character which render him quite interesting. He is all feeling. The death of his son he will not readily get over; and I will confidently assert that no native of the East ever loved his wife and children as

he does. Yesterday evening, he went into his harem for the first time since the late unhappy event.[1] A child of his brother met him, and called him father. That name, and the infantine voice with which it was pronounced, were too much for him: he shrieked, and fell senseless to the ground."[2]

To the Christian, loving his fellow-men as his Master loved them, the character thus delineated of this devout and conscientious Moslem is one of the deepest interest. If we believe, as we must, that with all its puerilities, absurdities, and impostures, the Koran does set forth the character and law of the one true God with sufficient clearness to enable an earnest and teachable seeker after the truth to come to him, and, guided by his Spirit, to know, believe in, and obey him, we might expect to find here and there a Mohammedan, who, though knowing, like Cornelius before his vision, nothing of the truth as it is in Jesus, yet, fearing God, and working righteousness, is accepted with him. And, having this expectation, it is with great and peculiar satisfaction that we meet with a well-authenticated case like this of Mahmoud Pasha. And we may have the further satisfaction of knowing that this is no singular and solitary case. Dr. Van Dyck of the Syrian Mission, in speaking of these statements of Mr. Rich, observed that he had no doubt of their correctness, or that Mahmoud Pasha was a truly God-fearing man; and added, that he had himself known men of the same charac-

[1] His little son had died of small-pox. [2] Id., vol. i. 322.

ter, — zealous Mohammedans, who, seeking the Lord in a sincere and obedient spirit, if, haply, they might feel after him, and find him, seemed, indeed, to have found him, and to have been accepted with him. Reflecting upon these cases, we may, perhaps, see a new meaning in our Saviour's words, when he said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold." "And they shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."

In the other leading Kûrds of Sulimania, Mr. Rich found, together with far greater energy and force of character, much of the same frankness, honesty, and simplicity, which characterized the Pasha. They displayed, also, what for the East was a very unusual aptitude for business, liberality of mind, and eagerness for information. But that which most surprised him was the condition of their women, who enjoyed a most unoriental freedom, independence, and consideration, being treated as equals by the other sex, and beloved, as they deserved to be, by their husbands. He found there among the Kûrds a degree of domestic happiness which he had seen nowhere else in the East. With these very feeling words, he takes leave of Sulimania: "I quit Kûrdistan with unfeigned regret. I most unexpectedly found in it the best people that I have ever met with in the East. I have formed friendships, and been uniformly treated with a degree of sincerity, kindness, and unbounded hospitality, which I fear I must not again

look for in the course of my weary pilgrimage, and the remembrance of which will last as long as life itself endures." [1]

The superior condition of the Kûrdish women has filled all Western travellers in those regions with surprise. Throughout the country, — in the castles of the chiefs, and among the wild shepherds of the mountains, — it is everywhere the same. On his journey to Sinna, Mr. Rich fell in with a large encampment of the wandering Jaf Kûrds upon one of their periodical migrations. "Their property was loaded on bullocks: the children were carried in cradles at the women's backs, or, if a little bigger, were loaded, two or three together, on the back of a mare or bullock. Several most masculine sibyls (complete Meg Merrilies) strode along with the other women: they seemed to be of great authority in taking charge of the parties." [2]

Another and very different yet equally suggestive scene is thus described by Mr. Laurie, who witnessed it in company with Dr. Grant: "We came to Bestawa, the village of the chief of Mezûry,[3] equally desolate. His wife was here with a few attendants, securing their rice. Her appearance at once commanded attention. The tassels of a silk shawl hung gracefully round the lower part of her turban. A green silk jacket, lined with fur, but now much the worse for wear, covered a dress of coarse blue cotton,

[1] Id., vol. i. p. 326. [2] Id., vol. i. p. 192.
[3] Or Missouri, as Mr. Layard spells the same name.

suggesting a sad contrast between former wealth and present poverty. Her features, once beautiful, now revealed a spirit roused, rather than broken, by misfortune. When Dr. Grant asked lodgings for the night, she raised her form to its full height, threw back her braided hair, and pointing to the roofless houses and ruined castle, to her own rags, and those of her attendants, 'See there!' said she. 'You have stripped us of all; you have driven us forth beggars in the land: and now do you ask for hospitality? We have nothing for you. Go to those with whom you have still left something; and may God be judge between us!' This is but an outline of an impassioned address in her native Kûrdish, imperfectly translated by our servant. Gesture, position, look, and tone, could not have been improved by the schools; and yet there was no extravagance. Her proud spirit scorned to yield to the violence of passion. All was said with a dignity of sorrow that affected us even more than her words; and we were heartily ashamed of our Turkish costume, that had led her to mistake us for her oppressors. When she learned who we were, she at once offered to share with us what she had; but there was nothing for our horses, and we were compelled to go on. . . . As we passed along the steep side of the narrow glen, we could speak of nothing but the heroine of Bestawa."[1]

[1] Dr. Grant and the Mountain Nestorians, p. 292. On reading this passage, one involuntarily exclaims, Helen MacGregor! and feels more forcibly than ever that the Kûrds are indeed the Gael of Western Asia. See the description of the wife of MacGregor in Rob Roy, chap. xxxi.

This brief notice may, perhaps, serve to give the reader some correct idea of this wild and fierce yet noble race. They are among the most rigorous and fanatical of Mohammedans; yet such is their native nobleness, that when their wild, fierce spirit has been curbed, and they have learned to yield a wholesome obedience even to Turkish law; when they begin to desire, as in due time they will, the blessings of intelligence, of social order, and of advancing civilization, which Christianity is bringing to their neighbors, and which Christianity, and that alone, can bring to them, — we shall see them reaching forth their hands to our missionaries, as the Druzes have already done, for help and instruction, and making ready the way for the full and free proclamation among them of the glad tidings of the great salvation. It may be that there are those now living who will see the Kûrds standing side by side with the Armenians and the Nestorians, in the full and assured enjoyment of the blessings of a Christian civilization, and laboring with earnest purpose to scatter the same blessings throughout the wide regions of Central Asia.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE YEZIDEES.

TO complete our survey, not of the Mohammedans alone, but of the non-Christian peoples of north-eastern Turkey, we may at this point devote a chapter to the Yezidees. The Yezidees are one of the most singular peoples of the East, and one which for ages has been despised by its Christian neighbors, and mercilessly persecuted by the Mohammedans, as a sect of Devil-worshippers. The origin of the Yezidees, and of their peculiar faith and religious rites, is involved in obscurity. From their language, which is a dialect of the Kûrdish, they have been set down by ethnologists as a Kûrdish tribe; while Mr. Layard, reasoning from their religious rites and notions, is inclined to regard them as a relic of the ancient Chaldæans. These theories are beset by equal difficulties; for it is as hard to imagine how a tribe of Kûrds should have such a religion, as how a Semitic-Chaldæan people should speak the Kûrdish language. We have, however, these two facts to account for: viz., their language, which plainly connects them with the old Medo-Persian stock; and their religion, which is

probably the most strangely comprehensive compound ever formed in the world. Whatever their origin may have been, their faith has always been of a singularly elastic character, and has received into itself the chief peculiarities of whatever religion has prevailed around them. The basis of their religious system is, no doubt, to be found in the doctrines of the ancient Magi and Sabæans. They greatly reverence the sun, which they call Sheikh Shems, devoutly kiss the place upon which fall its first morning beams, and have a small fane dedicated to it at Sheikh Adi. They also reverence fire, and consider the flame of their sacred lamps as possessed of a highly purifying power. With the Sabæans also, they hold the color blue in abhorrence, have a great fondness for white linen, particularly in their religious services, and practise frequent ablutions.

From the old Persian dualism[1] they have borrowed the mingled fear and respect with which they regard the prince of evil. With the Jews, they receive the Old Testament as a sacred book, and practise circumcision. But, not to be partial, they are as good Christians as they are Jews, and as good Mohammedans as they are Christians. They highly esteem the New

[1] The Persian dualism was a belief in two Gods, — Ahura-Mazda, "the spiritual mighty one," the God of light and goodness; and Ahriman, the god of darkness and evil. See an able and learned article by Prof. Whitney on the "Avesta," in the Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. v. p. 339; and Essay V., "On the Religion of the Ancient Persians," Rawlinson's Herodotus, vol. i. p. 339. For an account of the Manichæns, see Neander's Church History, voi. i. p. 478.

Testament, though not as highly as the Old; believe Christ to be a mighty angel who will again appear to subdue the world; and baptize as well as circumcise their children. And, finally, they regard Mohammed as a great prophet, and esteem the Koran as highly as the New Testament.

The principal object of their worship, however, is neither the sun, nor Satan, nor Christ, nor the Supreme Being, but Sheikh Adi, a kind of Christ of their own, whom they regard as not only a great saint or prophet, but as having been so taken up into union with God as to become invested with divine attributes and almighty power. But who Sheikh Adi was, what he did, or when he lived, they seem to have little idea. Indeed, the whole tribe is buried in the most deplorable ignorance; the only person among them able to read, so far as Mr. Layard could discover, being the secretary of Sheikh Nasr the high priest. Even of the significance of their religious rites, they seem to have but a very vague idea.

The fact that all the Yezidee hymns are in Arabic, and some hints in those hymns, make it probable that Sheikh Adi was an Arab. There is also much in the Yezidees to remind us of the Manichæan sect, that strange hybrid between Persian dualism and Christianity, which prevailed so widely in the fourth century, and by which St. Augustine in his earlier years was for a time led away. Sheikh Nasr informed Mr. Layard that they had an era of their own, of which he believed they were then in the year 1550.

This would carry us back to the very time of the Manichæans. All things considered, it seems most probable that Sheikh Adi was an Arab who flourished a little later than Manes; that he became the apostle of a new faith, the elements of which were drawn from all the religious systems then familiar in the East; and that he gathered his sect from among the Kûrds and Persians. Upon this hypothesis, nearly all the facts known to us respecting the Yezidees admit of a satisfactory explanation. It is to be observed as generally true of these small and obscure tribes of the East, who, though always poor, helpless, and greatly oppressed, have clung age after age, with a truly Oriental pertinacity, not only to their separate existence, but their social and religious peculiarities, that they have been inclined to so far defer to the opinions and prejudices of their more powerful neighbors, as to adopt into their own religious systems the leading features of theirs. This tendency appears no more conspicuously in the Yezidees than in their neighbors the Gûrans, and in the Nusairîyeh of Syria.

The one national temple, or place of worship, of the Yezidees, is the tomb of Sheikh Adi, a little temple and collection of sacred buildings most beautifully located in a deep secluded valley of the lower Kûrdish mountains, some forty or fifty miles north from Mosul.

The Yezidees have shared in the common misfortune of all small, obscure, and unpopular sects, in having attributed to them various evil doctrines and

practices which were just as abhorrent to them as to their neighbors, and with which they had just as little to do. Not only were they despised and persecuted as a sect of Devil-worshippers, but they were charged with all manner of obscene and blasphemous orgies in their religious assemblies. The common idea which, until recently, prevailed in regard to them, is well expressed in the notice of the sect contained in the article on the Devil and Devil-worship, in the New American Encyclopædia, which is as follows: "The Yezidees, a singular race, found in Kûrdistan and Armenia, are perhaps the only acknowledged worshippers of the Devil. They seem to have once professed Christianity, then Mohammedanism, and now risk their destiny on devilism. Admitting that the mighty angel Satan, the chief of an angelic host, at present has a quarrel with God, they believe that a reconciliation will hereafter take place, and that he will be restored to his high estate in the celestial hierarchy. This is the foundation of their hope; and they esteem their chance for heaven a better one than if they trusted to their own merits, or to the merits of the leader of any other religion whatsoever."

The native Christians of the neighborhood heartily despised this unfortunate people, while the Turks plundered, kidnapped, and slaughtered them without mercy. Even our early missionaries shared, to some extent in the prevailing feeling, and regarded the miserable Devil-worshippers as probably deserving

but too well the terrible oppressions which they endured. At length, however, their case came to be better understood. Mr. Rich and other travellers visited them; our missionaries, upon a more intimate acquaintance, were able to form a more correct estimate of their character; and finally Mr. Layard, who, in all his dealings with the peoples of the East, seems to have obeyed the apostolic injunction to do good as he had opportunity unto all men, was able to obtain from the Turkish Government, through Sir Stratford Canning, a firman securing to them entire relief from the great oppressions under which they groaned. As the result of this act of kindness, Mr. Layard came to be regarded by the poor Yezidees with the most unbounded gratitude and affection. He was received among them more like a prince than a friend, and freely admitted to their most sacred and most secret religious rites. He was thus enabled to give to the world a full and most interesting account of all that can be known concerning this strange, and before almost unknown people.[1] We now know that the Yezidees are in no proper sense worshippers of the Devil; and that though very ignorant, and greatly depressed socially, they are a very amiable and kindly people, standing, to say the least, fully as high in the moral scale as any other of the ancient peoples of the East.

The Yezidees, although acknowledging a single

[1] See Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. pp. 225–254; and Nineveh and Babylon, pp. 33–40, 65–79, 214.

chief as both the civil head and the high priest of their race, inhabit a number of separate districts, each with its own petty chief. Their principal seat is the district of Sheikhan, which lies north from Mosul, in the south-west corner of Kûrdistan. This district includes Sheikh Adi, and Bāādri, the residence of their common chief and high priest. Another tribe, formerly possessed of considerable power, inhabits the Sinjar Mountains, a rugged range rising from the midst of the great Mesopotamian plain, some eighty miles directly west from Mosul. Another tribe, which, until the subjugation of the whole country by the Turks, had its own independent chief like its Kûrdish neighbors, occupies the district of Redwan, which lies in the angle formed by the junction of the Sert with the Tigris, some forty or fifty miles above Jezireh. There are some other scattered settlements in the north of Kûrdistan, in Syria, and even beyond the Aras in the Russian dominions.

Until the time of Mohammed Kûr Bey of Rowandûz, the Yezidees were as independent as the Kûrds or Mountain Nestorians. But despised by all their neighbors, and bitterly persecuted by the Mohammedans, they lived a vexed and troubled life. The Moslem faith makes a broad distinction between unbelieving peoples with "the Book," — that is, a book which the Mohammedans themselves regard as sacred like the Jews and Christians, — and those having no such sacred writings. Jews and Christians having

the Old and New Testaments, which the Koran recognizes as of divine authority, are regarded as having some rights which the faithful are bound to respect. But not so the unfortunate Yezidees, and other peoples like them, which have no such book. Such tribes are wholly at their mercy, to be plundered, enslaved, or slaughtered by them at their pleasure. Accordingly, to make war upon the miserable Devil-worshippers, to plunder them, to carry off their children for slaves, and to lay waste their villages with fire and sword, has been from time immemorial the occupation or the amusement of the neighboring pashas or Kûrdish chiefs. The Yezidees, however, were strong enough to hold their own with tolerable success, and naturally, as they had opportunity, repaid this cruel treatment with interest. Every Turkish traveller or caravan passing within their reach was plundered without mercy; and rarely did the Mohammedan who fell into their power escape with his life. But this ferocious cruelty was practised only towards their more ferocious enemies. Christians who fell into their hands were habitually spared, as sufferers, like themselves, for conscience' sake. In those days the Yezidees were not without wealth and prosperity; for they have always been a notably industrious and thrifty people. They are a people also remarkable for the most unoriental virtue of the strictest cleanliness. Both their dwellings and their persons are almost always neat; and in their religious assemblies their white linen garments are spotlessly pure.

The breaking-down of the power of the Yezidees was the work of Kûr Bey of Rowandûz. Ali Bey, the last independent chief of the Yezidees, was a man of energy and ability; but his forces were greatly outnumbered by those of the chief of Rowandûz, and he was defeated, captured, and put to death. His helpless people then fled, a panic-stricken multitude, to Mosul for protection; but the river was swollen, the bridge of boats was broken, so that few were able to cross; and Mohammedans and Christians alike looked on in cold indifference as the merciless Kûrds came up and slaughtered in cold blood the whole of the miserable crowd. After this great success of their Kûrdish neighbor, Reschid Pasha of Mosul, and his successor Hafiz Pasha, undertook strong expeditions against the western Yezidees of the Sinjar. Both were successful; and two terrible massacres took place, by which a large portion of that tribe also was destroyed. After these disasters the Yezidees were thoroughly subdued, and for the most part yielded passively but immovably to their fate. Whatever oppressions and torments the Turks chose to inflict they patiently endured: but by no stress of persecution could any Yezidee be made to renounce his faith; and even children, sold in their earliest years into a hopeless slavery, still adhered secretly but firmly to the religion of their race.

When Mr. Layard first knew the Yezidees, Turkish oppression had completely crushed them to the earth. Not only were they helplessly exposed to the tyranny

of every government official, but they were torn from their homes to fill the regular army. This they regarded as the crowning hardship of their lot, as there were many things connected with the Turkish military service, in particular the blue color of the uniform, which were abhorrent to their religious scruples. It was from these oppressions that the firman obtained by Mr. Layard brought them great and immediate relief. This imperial decree freed them from all illegal impositions, forbade the selling of their children as slaves, secured to them the full enjoyment of their religion, and placed them upon the same footing as the other non-Moslem sects of the Empire. It was further promised that arrangements should be made to free them from such military regulations as conflicted with their religious scruples.

When Ali Bey was put to death, the nurse of his son Hussein, then a small child, fled with him to the mountains, where he grew up in safety. At the time of Mr. Layard's first visit, he had returned to his paternal home, and was living quietly at Bāādri, with no acknowledged civil power, but wielding a great influence over the whole Yezidee people. By birthright, Hussein Bey was not only the civil and religious head of the Yezidee race, but the *Peesh Namaz*, or leader of prayers at their annual solemnities at Sheikh Adi. But his extreme youth and critical position had made it necessary for him to devolve his high-priestly functions upon Sheikh Nasr; while

another religious dignitary, Sheikh Jindi, had charge of the sacred robes, and officiated as the *Peesh Namaz*. These three notables of the Yezidee race are thus described by Mr. Layard: —

"On approaching the village (of Bāādri), I was met by Hussein Bey, followed by the priests and principal inhabitants on foot. The chief was about eighteen years of age, and one of the handsomest young men I ever saw. His features were regular and delicate, his eye lustrous, and the long curls which fell from under his variegated turban of the deepest black. An ample white cloak of fine texture was thrown over his rich jacket and robes."[1] All Mr. Layard's subsequent intercourse with the young chief confirmed the favorable impression respecting him, produced on this first interview. He appeared to be amiable, ingenuous, and honest, in every way worthy of the position to which he had been born.

Soon afterwards, as they drew near Sheikh Adi, they had their first introduction to the high priest. "At some distance from the tomb, we were met by Sheikh Nasr, and a crowd of priests and armed men. The Sheikh was dressed in the purest white linen, as were the principal members of the priesthood. His age could scarcely have exceeded forty; his manners were most mild and pleasing. He welcomed me with warmth; and it was evident that my visit had made a very favorable impression upon all present."[2]

[1] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 227. [2] Idem, vol. i. p. 233.

The following passage, from the account of Mr. Layard's second visit to Sheikh Adi, will convey a vivid impression, not only of Sheikh Jindi the "leader of prayers," but of the ceremonies in which he officiated. It should be premised, that the *cawals* are the ordinary itinerating priesthood of the Yezidees, and the *fakirs* an inferior order who perform the more menial services about the temple, both being hereditary. "About an hour after sunset, Cawal Yusuf summoned Hormuzd and myself, who were alone allowed to be present, to the inner yard or sanctuary of the temple. We were placed in a room from the windows of which we could see all that took place in the court. The cawals, sheikhs, fakirs, and principal chiefs were already assembled. In the centre of the court was an iron lamp with four burners, a simple dish with four lips for the wicks, supported on a sharp iron rod driven into the ground; near it stood a fakir, holding in one hand a lighted torch, and in the other a large vessel of oil, from which he from time to time replenished the lamp, loudly invoking Sheikh Adi. The cawals stood against the wall on one side of the court, and commenced a slow chant, some playing on the flute, others on the tambourine, and accompanying the measure with their voices. The sheikhs and chiefs now formed a procession, walking two by two. At their head was Sheikh Jindi. He wore a tall, shaggy black cap, the hair of which hung far over the upper part of his face. A long robe, striped with horizon-

tal stripes of black and dark red, fell to his feet. A countenance more severe and yet more imposing than that of Sheikh Jindi could not well be pictured by the most fanciful imagination. A beard black as jet waved low on his breast; his dark, piercing eyes glittered through ragged eyebrows, like burning coals through the bars of a grate. The color of his face was of the deepest brown, his teeth white as snow, and his features, though stern beyond measure, singularly noble and well formed. It was a byword with us, that Sheikh Jindi had never been seen to smile. To look at him was to feel that a laugh could not be born in him. As he moved with a slow and solemn step, the flickering lamp deepening the shadows of his solemn and rugged countenance, it would have been impossible to conceive a being more eminently fitted to take the lead in ceremonies consecrated to the Evil One. . . . Behind him were two venerable sheikhs. They were followed by Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr, and the other chiefs and sheikhs came after. Their robes were all of the purest white. As they walked slowly round, sometimes stopping, then resuming their measured step, they chanted prayers in glory and honor of the Deity. The cawals accompanied the chant with their flutes, beating, at intervals, the tambourines. Round the burning lamps, and within the circle formed by the procession, danced the fakirs in their black dresses, with solemn pace timed to the music, raising and swinging to and fro their arms after the manner of

Eastern dancers, and placing themselves in attitudes not less decorous than elegant.

"To hymns in praise of the Deity, succeeded others in honor of Melek Isa and Sheikh Adi. The chants passed into quicker strains, the tambourines were beaten more frequently, the fakirs became more active in their motions, and the women made the loud *tahlel;* the ceremonies ending with that extraordinary scene of noise and excitement that I have attempted to describe in relating my first visit.[1] When the prayers were ended, those who marched in procession kissed, as they passed by, the right side of the doorway leading into the temple, where a serpent is figured on the wall; but not, as I was assured, the image itself, which has no typical or other meaning, according to Sheikh Nasr and Cawal Yusuf. Hussein Bey, then placing himself on the step at this entrance, received the homage of the sheikhs and elders, each touching the hand of the young chief with his own, and raising it to his lips. All present afterwards gave one another the kiss of peace."[2]

The Yezidee priesthood consists of four orders below the high priest and the leader of prayers. The first consists of a few *pirs*, or saints, who are supposed to be persons of great sanctity, and to possess something approaching to miraculous power. The second consists of the sheikhs, who have a knowledge of their hymns, and know something of Arabic, the language

[1] See below, p. 261. [2] Nineveh and Babylon, p. 67.

of their sacred writings. Excepting a black skull-cap beneath their turbans, their dress is white. They have charge of the temple, watch over the tomb, receive pilgrims, and take charge of all offerings. The cawals form the third order; and, besides their duties at the annual festival, they pass up and down through all the Yezidee villages, teaching the doctrines of their religion, collecting money, baptizing the children, and apparently performing some funeral rites over the graves of the dead. They carry with them a curious bronze or copper image, called *melek taous*, or king peacock, which they regard and treat with great reverence. They say, however, that it is in no sense an idol, but only the symbol and evidence of their office. The fakirs, who perform the more menial services at the temple and tomb, are the fourth and lowest order. All these orders are hereditary, and descend to women as well as men. And here it may be observed that the women of the Yezidees are as free, and enjoy as high consideration, as those of the Kûrds.

The Yezidees believe that Satan is the chief of the angelic host, that he is now in rebellion and under the divine wrath, but that he will eventually become reconciled to God, and be restored to his former position in the celestial hierarchy. And as he now has the power to do them great evil, and will hereafter be able to confer great benefits upon them, they feel constrained to conciliate him, and to treat him with great deference and respect. So far as Mr. Layard

could discover, however, their reverence for the Evil One was manifested only in a powerful sentiment of awe and fear. But so strong and pervading was this sentiment, that they would not pronounce his name (Sheitan), nor any word resembling it in sound; and if the ill-omened word was carelessly or accidentally uttered in their presence, even by a stranger, it filled them with the greatest consternation.

As already observed, the one national temple or sacred place of the Yezidees is Sheikh Adi, or the tomb of Sheikh Adi, situated in a deep secluded valley, surrounded by lofty and precipitous mountains, forty or fifty miles north of Mosul. It is a beautiful place, watered by a gurgling stream, and deeply shaded by noble trees. A more agreeable location for an annual summer festival could hardly be found. The white spire of the tomb, or temple, rises in the middle of the valley; around this central edifice are others devoted to various sacred uses; while, farther away upon the hillsides, the several tribes and families have erected rude sheds for shelter during their annual visit. On two occasions Mr. Layard attended the great annual festival of the Yezidees; and the impression left upon his mind was one altogether favorable and pleasing. The people came together to the number of five or six thousand. All of them washed both their persons and their clothing before coming to the tomb, in the sacred stream which flows from the valley, and came in spotless cleanliness to their solemnities. They remained for three days,

passing the time in joyous festivities, in social converse, in harmless amusements, and in attendance upon the religious rites. On every hand numerous peddlers and petty traffickers displayed their wares. Groups of comely girls, as free and mirthful as if born upon English or American soil, and very pleasant to look upon in their spotless dresses, wove garlands of flowers, or chatted merrily under the trees. No improper word or act was to be heard or seen; and a more decorous and pleasing festival among an untaught heathen people could hardly be imagined.

The character of the religious rites of this great yearly solemnity of the Yezidees may be clearly understood from the account of them already given. The impression made upon Mr. Layard's mind by the performance of these rites on the first night of his first visit was very powerful. As evening came on, the fakirs issued from the temple, and proceeded to trim and light the lamps in every part of the valley, until it seemed to glitter with innumerable stars. As they went about upon this errand, men and women passed their hands through the flame of their lamps, rubbed their right eyebrows with the part thus purified, and then carried them to their lips. Presently the people themselves began to light torches which they carried in their hands as they wandered about. What next occurred, let Mr. Layard himself relate: "As I was gazing on this extraordinary scene, the hum of human voices was suddenly hushed, and a strain solemn and melancholy arose from the valley.

It resembled some majestic chant which years before I had listened to in the cathedral of a distant land. Music so pathetic and so sweet, I had never before heard in the East. The voices of men and women were blended in harmony with the soft notes of many flutes. At measured intervals, the song was broken by the loud clash of cymbals and tambourines; and those who were without the precincts of the tomb then joined in the melody." But, as the plaintive chant went on, the measure gradually quickened; a kindling excitement seized upon the performers, the tambourines were more loudly beaten, the women raised the loud and piercing *tahlel,* until the singing became a deafening yell, and the music a tremendous uproar of discordant sounds, the musicians finally throwing themselves upon the ground with every conceivable contortion, in a perfect frenzy of excitement. Chants of this kind performed in Arabic, which few even of the priests understood, with the dances of the fakirs and young men, were the principal features in the sacred rites of the Yezidees at this their great annual solemnity.

The new and striking light thus thrown upon this ancient and most singular people, so cruelly oppressed and so universally despised, may well change the contempt so long poured upon them into sympathy and respect. It seems very clear that the Yezidees are a relic of the old Medo-Persian race, and that their religion is a distorted outgrowth of that mixture of Persian dualism and Christianity

which formed the religious system of the Manichæans. This explains the awe and fear with which they regard the Evil One; while in their religious cleanliness, their general virtue, their reverence for the sun and fire, and their acknowledgment of the one supreme God of light and goodness, the Ahura-Mazda of their remote ancestors, they show themselves the true descendants of those old Zoroastrian Persians, whose faith was by far the best and noblest of the early unrevealed religions of mankind. Hitherto they have been a people meted out and trodden down, for whose souls no man cared. It does not appear that any effort has ever been made to impart to them a clearer knowledge of the God whom they ignorantly worship. Yet, from the knowledge we now have of them, it would seem that few peoples within the range of our knowledge present a more alluring field for the labors of a Christian philanthropy. We cannot doubt that their heroic constancy under persecution, and their many virtues, are yet to adorn a Christian people, happy themselves in the possession of light and truth, and a blessing to other races, even to their ancient persecutors themselves.

CHAPTER XX.

THE MODERN ARABS.

THE arms and influence of the Saracens communicated their language, as well as their religion, to many tribes and a large population not of their blood. This was especially true in the North of Africa, where the wandering tribes of the great Sahara, similar in habits and mode of life to themselves, readily adopted their religion, their language, and their name. All Mohammedans who speak the Arabic language are now spoken of as belonging to the Arabic race.

In this wider sense, the Arabic is at the present day one of the most widely extended of all the races of the human family. Its countless tribes occupy almost exclusively, not only the great peninsula which bears their name, covering an area of a million of square miles, but the whole of Asiatic Turkey east of Syria, and south of Armenia and Kûrdistan. They are found in great numbers in Persia, and even in India; they form a large proportion of the population of Egypt and Nubia, and wander over the whole of the boundless desert regions in the North of Africa. It

is a singular fact, that the Government of Liberia has lately proposed, as a measure of self-defence, to send young men to be educated at the newly founded Arabic college at Beirût, for the purpose of civilizing and Christianizing the barbarous tribes of their own interior. It is estimated that the Arabic language is now spoken by sixty or seventy millions of the human family. At present, we are concerned only with the Arabs of Asiatic Turkey; if, indeed, the Arabian Peninsula, which has always been in great measure independent of the Sultan, ought to be included in that Empire.

Before considering the Arabs themselves, let us obtain a clear idea of the country they inhabit. That country has embraced from time immemorial a large district in what is called the Syrian desert, lying to the north of Arabia proper, and reaching as far as Thapsacus on the Euphrates, in lat. 35° 18′. But such has been the miserable inefficiency of the Turkish Government, and the short-sighted, rapacious policy of its local pashas for the past half-century, that the Arabs have been allowed steadily to encroach upon the settled districts, and to crowd back their inhabitants, until now the vast wilderness over which they wander with their flocks and herds reaches to the very base of the Syrian, Armenian, and Kûrdish mountains.

The whole of this immense territory is frequently spoken of as "the desert." Yet but a comparatively small part of it is a waste of barren sand. The Syrian

desert, though a dreary region without trees or water, is not a sandy waste, but is covered with coarse vegetation; while Mesopotamia and the similar region east of the Tigris, the territories of ancient Assyria and Babylonia, now almost wholly abandoned to the Arabs, are prodigally fruitful when artificially watered, and will again sustain in some better day, as they did in ancient times, a dense and opulent population.

As we have already seen, the soil and physical character of Arabia proper are exceedingly various. Perhaps a third of the peninsula is one of the most dismal and inhospitable regions that the sun shines upon; its vast expanses of scorching sand being varied only by hideous mountain ranges, which lift their naked and sun-blackened cliffs into the blazing sky. Yet even these sandy wastes produce in the rainy season a considerable amount of coarse vegetation, enough to provide a winter pasture for the flocks and herds of the wandering tribes. The southern seacoast of Arabia has upon the west, at the entrance of the Red Sea, the two principalities of Saana and Mocha, and upon the east that of Oman, with Muscat for its capital, at the entrance of the Persian Gulf. In all three of these little states, there are populous and well-cultivated districts, famous for their coffee and other products. The vast interior table-land of Nedjd has many fruitful and populous valleys, with not only villages and towns, but considerable cities, some of them containing as many as twenty or thirty thousand people. Some of these valleys are watered

by running streams, but most of them depend mainly upon wells. One of these valleys, that of the Djowf, sixty or seventy miles long by twelve broad, and containing a population of some thirty thousand inhabitants, was the first reached by Mr. Palgrave on his journey inland from Palestine, and is thus described by him: —

"A broad, deep valley descending ledge after ledge till its innermost depths are hidden from sight amid far-reaching shelves of reddish rock; below, everywhere studded with tufts of palm-groves and clustering fruit-trees in dark green patches, down to the farthest end of its windings; a large brown mass of irregular masonry crowning a central hill; beyond, a tall and solitary tower overlooking the opposite bank of the hollow; and, farther down, small round turrets and flat housetops half buried amid the garden foliage; the whole plunged in a perpendicular flood of light and heat, — such was the first aspect of the Djowf, as we now approached it from the west. It was a lovely scene, and seemed yet more so to our eyes, weary of the long desolation through which we had, with hardly an exception, journeyed day after day since our last farewell glimpse of Gaza and Palestine."[1] In the outer ring of mountains, there are also scattered here and there valleys of less extent, but of equal fruitfulness and beauty. Some of these are described by Burckhardt as exceedingly delightful, and abounding not only in almost every kind of fruit, but in wheat,

[1] Central Arabia, vol. i. p. 46.

barley, and onions. Among these is Tayf near Mecca, the summer residence of the wealthy citizens of that city.

The great interior highland region of Nedjd seems to be the central seat of the Arab race. The powerful family of the Shammar Arabs, which for the past three-quarters of a century has been predominant in Mesopotamia, and whose Sheikh Sofuk, "the King of the Desert," is described in Mr. Layard's first work, is a branch of the great tribe inhabiting the Jebel Shammar, the northern division of the great plateau. When Mr. Layard was in Mesopotamia, the head chief of all the Shammar Arabs was Telal Ibn Reshid, a powerful and able prince, to whom belonged the valley of the Djowf described above. Many of the wanderers in Mesopotamia are said to be still the owners, legally if not in fact, of gardens and fields in Jebel Shammar.

The modern Arabs are more like their Saracen ancestors, are a far nobler and more important race, and have a far grander part yet to play upon the great stage of human affairs, than most of us have supposed. The emphatic testimony of the Baron de Larry[1] to their high qualities, both physical and mental, is fully sustained by travellers who have had opportunity to mingle with them familiarly in the remote seclusion of their desert home. Burckhardt, the highest authority upon this subject, after describing the faults of the Arab character, speaks of their

[1] Quoted above, p. 31.

better qualities as follows: "The Arab displays his manly character when he defends his guest at the peril of his own life, and submits to the reverses of fortune, to disappointment and distress, with the most patient resignation. He is, besides, distinguished from a Turk by the virtues of pity and gratitude, which the Turk seldom possesses. The Turk is cruel, the Arab of a more kind temper; he pities and supports the wretched, and never forgets the generosity shown to him even by an enemy. Not accustomed to the sanguinary scenes that harden and corrupt an Osmanly's heart, the Bedouin learns, at an early period of his life, to abstain and to suffer, and to know from experience the healing power of pity and consolation.

"The Arab is free, sprightly, jocose, and decent in his familiar conversation, . . . not by any means that silent being which some travellers represent him; on the contrary, I found him a merry companion. . . . The wandering Arabs have certainly more wit and sagacity than the people who live in towns; their heads are always clear, their spirits unimpaired by debauchery, and their minds not corrupted by slavery; and I am justified in saying that there are few nations among whom natural talents are so universally diffused as among the Bedouins. In sensual enjoyments they are very moderate and abstemious. If an Arab has a sufficiency of food, he cares but little about its quality, or about those luxuries which we call 'pleasures of the table.' With respect to women, he is generally content with his own wife;

instances of conjugal infidelity are very rare, and public prostitution is unknown in the Arab camps. I was soon obliged to acknowledge, on seeing the Bedouins, that, with all their faults, they were one of the noblest nations with which I had ever had an opportunity of becoming acquainted. . . . The social character of a Bedouin, when there is no question of profit or interest, may be described as truly amiable. His cheerfulness, wit, softness of temper, good nature, and sagacity, which enables him to make shrewd remarks on all subjects, render him a pleasing and often a valuable companion. His equality of temper is never ruffled or affected by fatigue or suffering. . . . The first trait in the character of a Bedouin (next to good faith) is his kindness, benevolence, and charity, his peaceful demeanor, whenever his warlike spirit, or wounded honor, does not call him to arms. Among themselves, the Bedouins constitute a nation of brothers; often quarrelling with each other, it must be owned, but ever ready, when at peace, to give mutual assistance." They "delight to foster within their breasts the sentiments of mercy and compassion, which often cause them to forget that an unfortunate person is perhaps an enemy." A Bedouin "in the greatest paroxysm of rage abstains from the use of language which could never be forgiven. . . . If such violent language is not used, a quarrel among the Bedouins seldom lasts half an hour. . . . But, for insulted honor, no excuse or apology can ever be accepted." [1]

[1] Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys, vol. i. pp. 183–187, 358–369.

These views are fully indorsed by Mr. Layard, whose opportunities for a thorough acquaintance with the Arab character were hardly inferior to those of Burckhardt. No better picture of the ideal Arab can be placed before the reader's eye, than that presented in this eminent writer's description of Suttum, a leading sheikh of the Shammar Arabs, in whose company he penetrated to the innermost recesses of the Mesopotamian desert: —

"The Mesopotamian desert had been his home from his birth, and he knew every spring and pasture. He was of the Sāādi, one of the most illustrious families of the Shammar; and he possessed great personal influence in his tribe. His intelligence was of a very high order; and he was as well known for his skill in Bedouin intrigue, as for his skill and daring in war. In person he was of middle height, of spare habit, but well made, and of noble and dignified carriage. . . . His features were regular and well proportioned, and of that delicate character so frequently found among the nomades of the desert. A restless and sparkling eye of the deepest black spoke the inner man, and seemed to scan and penetrate every thing within its ken. His dark hair was platted into many long tails; his beard, like that of the Arabs in general, was scanty. He wore the usual Arab shirt, and over it a cloak of blue cloth trimmed with red silk, and lined with fur; a present from some pasha, as he pretended, but more probably a part of some

great man's wardrobe that had been appropriated without its owner's consent. . . . He was the very picture of a true Bedouin sheikh; and his liveliness, his wit, and his singular powers of conversation, which made him the most agreeable of companions, did not belie his race. . . .

"Suttum's tact and intelligence were indeed remarkable. Nothing escaped his hawk-like eye. A few hours had enabled him to form a correct estimate of the character of each one of the party; and he had detected peculiarities which might have escaped the notice of the most observant European. The most polished Turk would have been far less at home in the society of ladies; and, during the whole of our journey, he never committed a breach of manners only acquired during a few hours' residence with us. As a companion, he was delightful; full of anecdotes, of unclouded spirits, acquainted with the history of every Bedouin tribe, their politics and their wars, and intimate with every part of the desert, its productions and its inhabitants. Many happy hours I spent with him, seated, after the sun went down, on a mound overlooking the great plain and the winding river, listening to the rich flow of his graceful Bedouin dialect, to his eloquent stories of Arab life, and to his animated descriptions of forrays, wars, and single combats." [1]

Having thus introduced the reader to the Arab

[1] Nineveh and Babylon, pp. 203, 233.

race as it appears in the best and noblest aspects of its national character, where, in the remote solitudes of its desert home, it has yet remained in great measure uncontaminated by foreign influences, let me now ask his attention to a brief but comprehensive survey of that race in its several divisions, with reference to its political organization, and the general character and habits of its numberless tribes as they now exist in Arabia and Asiatic Turkey.

These Arabs may be divided into five classes. Beginning at the lowest round of the ladder, we have, first, the sedentary or settled Arabs; those who, taking up their abode upon the outskirts of civilization, have abandoned their wandering life; and though still, many of them, dwelling in tents, have become cultivators of the soil. By their nomadic brethren, these settled Arabs are thoroughly despised, as degraded and denationalized by the change in their mode of life.

Secondly, we have the wandering tribes, whose life is passed in the neighborhood of the settled districts, and in constant intercourse with their inhabitants. Both these classes, but more especially the latter, are thoroughly demoralized. Like North American Indians in similar circumstances, they have acquired all the vices, with none of the virtues, of civilization. They are, many of them, among the basest, most treacherous, and most villanous of mankind.

The third class consists of the Arabs of the Turkish towns and cities, the poor remnant of the old

Saracenic population of Syria and Mesopotamia. Among these there is found as much of civilization and culture as yet remains in those unhappy countries; but they, too, are a degenerate class, both in language and character. Their freedom of spirit is gone; they are narrow, fanatical, and bigoted, while morally their condition is deplorably low.

The fourth class consists of the inhabitants of the towns and cities of Arabia proper, who, by the peculiar situation of their country, have remained more thoroughly secluded from the rest of the world than even the wandering tribes of the desert; their very existence, in fact, having been unknown until comparatively recent times. This class will engage our attention more particularly when we come to speak of the Wahabys.

Finally, we have the great nomadic tribes of the interior, who still wander here and there with their flocks and herds as their fathers have done for four thousand years; still preserving unchanged the primitive character, habits, and customs of their race; displaying to-day the same manners and mode of life which were seen in the tents of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the patriarchs of the land of Uz. The Arabs of this class are called Bedouins, in distinction from those who are settled and fixed to the soil. The Bedouins are the wandering tribes of the desert, not including the settled Arabs of the Nedjd, however primitive their manners, or pure their blood. To these wandering tribes the next chapter will be devoted.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BEDOUINS.

THE Bedouins, or wandering Arabs, are divided into several great tribes, like the Aneyzas, who occupy the vast region north of Nedjd and west of the Euphrates, of whom Burckhardt speaks more particularly; and the Shammar, already spoken of, whose primitive seat is the settled region in the northern part of Nedjd, or the great plateau, but whose wandering tribes are predominant in Mesopotamia. These great tribes have each a Great Sheikh at its head, who enjoys more or less influence over the whole. But they are divided and subdivided into innumerable smaller tribes, septs, and clans, every one of which has its own sheikh. Sofuk, the "king of the desert" thirty-five years ago, was at the head of all the Mesopotamian Shammar; and, at a later period, Telal Ibn Reshid was the Great Sheikh of the whole Shammar race.

As already observed, the Sheikh is simply an hereditary leader of great respectability and influence. He has no legislative authority, and no executive power, save as the result of personal ascendency over his

followers. As a general rule, they would laugh at his commands, and follow him or not, just as they pleased, in their wild and absolute freedom. He can lay no tax upon his tribe, and depends for his income wholly upon his own property, his share of the plunder taken, and whatever tribute he can lay upon his neighbors, upon passing caravans, or strangers. Not only can he collect no tax from his followers: his position involves no small expenditure. He must be profuse in his hospitality, provide for the poor, be liberal in assisting his friends, and share with them all presents which he may receive. If, however, a popular sheikh should meet with any heavy loss, his people gladly contribute to replace the lost property; and, what they do for their sheikhs in this respect, they are equally ready to do for others. Indeed, almost any Arab of good repute can readily collect from his own or other friendly tribes enough, often more than enough, to make good a heavy loss, or to repay the heavy fines sometimes imposed by the kadi, or judge.

The Arabs are very greedy for gain, and will lie and cheat to secure it as much as any trader in a Syrian bazaar; but, the desired property once secured, they usually dispose of it with a generous profusion. Mr. Layard observes that an Arab will beg all day for a handkerchief, or some trifling article, and then give it away to the first man who asks for it. And Burckhardt tells us that the great ambition of the true Arab, in the use of his wealth, is to be able to

be more profuse and munificent in his hospitality than any other man of his tribe. The same writer has elsewhere these remarks upon the importance of wealth among these children of the desert: "It may be truly said that wealth alone does not give a Bedouin any importance among his people. A poor man, if he be hospitable and liberal according to his means, always killing a lamb when a stranger arrives, giving coffee to all the guests present, holding his bag of tobacco always ready to supply the pipes of his friends, and sharing whatever booty he gets among his poor relations, sacrificing his last penny to honor his guest or relieve those who want, obtains infinitely more consideration and influence among his tribe than the *bakheil*, or avaricious and wealthy miser, who receives a guest with coldness, and lets his poor friends starve. As riches among this nation of robbers do not confer influence or power, so the wealthy person does not derive from them any more refined gratification than the poorest individual of the tribe may enjoy. The richest sheikh lives like the meanest of his Arabs: they both eat every day of the same dishes, and in the same quantity, and never partake of any luxury unless on the arrival of a stranger, when the host's tent is open to all his friends. They both dress in the same kind of shabby gown and *messhlakh*. The chief pleasure in which the chief may indulge is the possession of a swift mare, and the gratification of seeing his wife and daughters better dressed than the other females of the camp." [1] These last remarks

[1] Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys, vol. i. p. 72.

are true only of the desert tribes. Those Sheikhs who are brought much into contact with the Turkish pashas imitate too readily, not only their richness of dress, but their evil practices in other things. Sofuk, the "king of the desert," was hardly less treacherous and bloody than his Turkish neighbors.

The principle of blood for blood prevails among all the Bedouins in its most relentless, inexorable form. When an Arab has been killed, no matter how, whether in open fight, upon a plundering excursion, or by deliberate murder, the nearest kinsmen of the slain hold it their bounden duty to avenge his death. They may, as they often do, accept the price of blood; but, until this is done, there can be neither peace nor safety to the slayers. Blood has been shed, and blood must pay the debt. Nor is it the slayer's life alone which is imperilled by his act. Any male relative of his within the fifth degree may lawfully be put to death to pay this debt of blood. This law of blood for blood is a terrible law; and yet both Burckhardt and Mr. Layard regard its workings among these wild sons of the desert as most wholesome and salutary. So terrible and far-reaching are the results of bloodshed, that the Arab is exceedingly careful, at all times, not to incur its penalties. But for the restraints of this inexorable law, as both these writers observe, it would seem as if these turbulent tribes must long ago have exterminated one another. The Arabs are brave enough, as all their history shows, when fighting for the honor of their

tribe or their race, or with a foreign enemy; but such wars are not of frequent occurrence in the desert. Upon his plundering expeditions, so careful is the Arab not to incur the penalty of blood, that he retires before any considerable force, like the veriest coward. These enterprises, accordingly, rarely result in any serious loss of life.

The Arab is a robber by profession, and glories in the name. He depends upon robbery for his wealth, almost for the means of subsistence. He accounts it most honorable to plunder all classes of men not in full peace and amity with his tribe, and does not hesitate, although this is not deemed quite creditable, to steal from his friends, and even other clans of his own tribe. But the true and high-minded Arab, if such language does not involve an absurdity, robs lawfully, honestly, and honorably. He will not attack his victims in the night: that would be deemed treacherous; it might involve the invasion of the tents of the women, and much loss of life. He aims to come upon his prey suddenly and with overwhelming force, so as to carry off his booty without risk of bloodshed. But still more frequently he engages in private enterprises of the same character. In these, with three or four companions, he stealthily approaches the tents which he wishes to plunder, in the night; and, if he succeeds in leading away a number of mares and camels without alarming their owners, even they respect him all the more for his skill and address.

If the nocturnal robber fails, and is captured, his

subsequent treatment is very curious and characteristic. His captor at first beats him until he forces him to cry out, "I renounce!" — that is, I renounce the right of protection as a guest, — and then employs a singular and very effectual method to hold him prisoner, without the possibility of gaining the protection of any other man, until he can obtain a ransom. He digs a shallow grave in his tent, and places his captive in it, heaping over it all the loose articles in the tent, leaving only an aperture through which he can breathe. Here the poor fellow is kept sometimes for months. But if any friend in the camp desires to aid him, and can throw into the opening even a piece of a date, the prisoner has eaten with him, is thenceforth under his protection, and must be set free to go in peace.

If the robbers find, that, for any reason, their enterprise is likely to miscarry, they boldly enter the first tent they come to, and cry, "We are robbers, and want to halt;" when, so sacred are the rights of the guest to every Arab mind, once within the hut, the only answer is, "You are safe." A repast is at once provided: they are hospitably entertained, and dismissed in peace.

This right of *dakheil*, or protection, is so sacred to every true Arab, that he would sooner die than violate it, or see it violated in his tent. This right is secured by eating the smallest portion of food with an Arab, even though he be a deadly enemy, or even by coming beneath his tent. A man who has come

under the protection of any Arab is perfectly safe, both in person and property, not only with all his tribe, but with all friendly tribes; that is, he is just as safe as his protector himself. Under the protection of a single guide, a man may travel for days and weeks together in perfect safety, through the most secluded regions of this nation of robbers, unless he happens to meet some prowling desperado who acknowledges no law, or the men of some hostile tribe.

An Arab will lie and cheat, and swear any number of false oaths, in a pecuniary transaction; but, when once his faith is pledged, he can be implicitly trusted, even to the last extremity. Any thing committed to his hands is usually safe. Frequent as are his oaths in ordinary conversation, he has a great dread of oaths formally administered, and, when thus sworn, will rarely perjure himself. Mr. Layard mentions several instances of remarkable honesty and good faith among the Arabs whom he knew in Mesopotamia. One of these may be cited as an example. Two of his horses had been stolen in the night; and his guide, a brother of Sheikh Suttum, regarding himself as in a measure responsible for them, took an oath, on parting with him, to find them, wherever they might be, and restore them to him. "He began at once to seek the animals. After a six-weeks' search, during which he went as far as Ana on the Euphrates, where one had been sold to an Arab of the town, he brought them to Mosul, . . . and

returned to the desert without asking a reward for performing an act of duty imperative on a Bedouin. Such instances of honesty and good faith are not uncommon amongst the wandering Arabs, as I can bear witness from personal experience." [1]

The Arabs of the desert observe partially the laws of the Koran; but their most sacred laws are found in the immemorial customs of the tribes. These usages are exceedingly comprehensive and explicit, fixing precisely the course to be pursued in almost every conceivable emergency, the penalty for every offence, even for a blow or an insulting word, and even the words to be used upon every important occasion: as when the captured robber cries, "I renounce," that is, the right of protection; or the enraged husband pronounces the irrevocable words, "*Ent talek*," thou art divorced. These laws are administered by kadis, one or two of whom are found in every important tribe. Their office is hereditary; and they are generally men of much shrewdness and discrimination, though rarely able to read and write. Too often, however, they are not above the reach of bribes; and their decisions are not always as fair and just as they ought to be. The defendant or his accuser may appeal to a second kadi, and even to a third; but, if three kadis coincide in their judgment, the decision is usually final. Important cases, however, especially if blood has been shed, are often referred to the *mebesshae*, a kind of superior judge,

[1] Nineveh and Babylon, p. 493.

who, if the question can be settled in no other way, subjects the accused person to a solemn ordeal, by requiring him to apply his tongue to a red-hot spoon. If he escapes uninjured, he is pronounced innocent; if he is burned, his guilt is considered proved. Both the kadi and the *mebesshae* receive a considerable fee for their services, which is always paid by the successful litigant. The kadis have no means of enforcing their decisions; but a final judgment is almost always complied with. If a man persistently refuses to do what is just and right, according to the usages of the desert, in this or any other case, the aggrieved party has only to proclaim him "treacherous," and he becomes, in a manner, outlawed; losing the right of protection, and all safeguards for either person or property. Treachery, that is, a violation of the sacred usages which ought to govern their conduct even in robbery and blood-revenge, is always regarded by the Bedouins as a grievous offence. In their eyes, no greater stigma can be fixed upon a man's character than by proclaiming him treacherous.

The Arabs of the desert speak their native language with remarkable purity and grammatical correctness. This is owing to the constant repetition among them of their ancient poetry. The Arabic of the towns is much debased, or rather changed; the language is found in its purest and most classic form only in the desert. Books, and the ability to read, are almost unknown among the Bedouins; but

they are not for this reason destitute of a certain degree of even high literary cultivation. The gifts and powers of eloquence are greatly esteemed and frequently possessed among them; and they are described as almost a nation of poets. It is said that many a simple wanderer of the desert is capable of poetical effusions which, if their elegance and felicity of expression, and their freedom and vigor of thought, could be transferred into English, would give him no mean reputation, even among ourselves. Indeed, to obtain a very clear idea of what these simple-minded but vigorous children of nature are capable of in this direction, we have only to read the matchless speech of Judah before Joseph, and the noble poetry of the Book of Job. The body of poetry circulating from mouth to mouth among the Arabs of the desert is immense; and much of it has doubtless come down, almost unchanged, from remote generations. This poetry has a tremendous power over the minds of the Arabs; and their war-songs, as sung or chanted by their wandering minstrels or their women, will send them to the field in a frenzy of martial excitement. Burckhardt assures us that there is hardly any delight known to the Arab mind, surpassing that of the *mesamer*, a simple and wholly unexceptionable combination of dance and song, with which every tribe of the desert is accustomed to beguile the evening hours. "This dance, which continues frequently for five or six hours, and till long after midnight, and the pathetic songs which often

accompany it, most powerfully work upon the imagination and feelings of the Arabs; and they never speak of the *mesamer* but with raptures."

The same writer's remark, that the Arabs are the only true lovers in the East, has been already cited. The condition of women among them, as is the case with every barbarous people, is, indeed, very far from what we could wish to see it. Their life is a life of drudgery, while their husbands and brothers sit lazily smoking or playing at draughts in the tents; but it is still immeasurably superior to that of their sex among the Turks. A Bedouin father feels a strong affection for his daughter, and will rarely disgrace his family by receiving a price, or even a present, from her husband. Marriages are very frequently the result of mutual attachment; and, although divorces are exceedingly common, it was Burckhardt's impression that the irrevocable words were more frequently spoken in passion and haste, than from coldness and settled aversion; while in multitudes of cases husband and wife remained faithful to each other until separated by death. One case came under his notice, in which a man who had hastily pronounced the words of divorce, having heard that his former wife had married again, in despair put an end to his own life. He found the Arab girls reserved and modest, even to prudery. Licentiousness seemed a thing almost unknown. Polygamy is allowed; but none but the sheikhs can afford to indulge in it, and comparatively few Arabs have more than one wife. While

an Arab cares nothing for the character of his own dress, he is usually ready to spend all that he can afford, to purchase fine clothes and ornaments for his wife and daughters ; and we are told that an Arab of Mount Sinai, going to Cairo with his little load of charcoal, will deny himself every personal indulgence rather than not be able to carry some little present to his family.

A mild form of negro slavery prevails in most of the Bedouin tribes. Every wealthy sheikh makes it a point to buy every year one or more negro slaves at Bagdad or some similar mart. These slaves are usually well treated. The females are not reduced to concubinage ; and their lives and persons are surrounded with the same safeguards as those of their masters. They are employed in caring for the camels and flocks, and in the labors of the camp. After a few years of faithful service, they usually receive their freedom. They accept their condition kindly and cheerfully, and, both as slaves and as freedmen, make devoted adherents of their masters. These emancipated negroes have become very numerous, and form families and clans by themselves throughout the desert. They intermarry among themselves, and with the artisans of the Arab villages, but never with the high-spirited wanderers of the Bedouin tribes. Among the so-called Arabic tribes of the north of Syria, Burckhardt enumerates one sprung from an emancipated black slave of the great Metewaly house of Harfûsh at Baalbek.

Although comparatively reputable and virtuous in their social morals, the Bedouins are not, and within the past two thousand years never have been, a very religious people. Their Mohammedanism sits very lightly upon them; and, excepting those under Wahaby influence, they cannot read the Koran, rarely have any religious services, or repeat the appointed prayers. Several recent writers have remarked that the great successes of Mohammedanism have been won in other races, and among foreign nations; and that the teachings of their prophet have never taken a strong hold upon the convictions of his wayward and sceptical countrymen. So far as it relates to the Bedouins, this remark is true. Mohammedanism, like Judaism and Christianity, is what the Arabs call a religion of "the Book;" that is, a religion based in what is received as a written revelation. It presupposes the ability to read the sacred book, and requires, for its successful working, not only stated religious services and ordinances, but a learned or at least intelligent ministry. Among the Bedouins, these conditions are wholly wanting; and, as a consequence, their Mohammedanism has always been of a very loose and imperfect character. But in the Arab towns, where the Koran could be read, where the people could frequent the mosque, and where the services of their religion could be conducted by well-instructed imams, the Arabs have not fallen behind any of their co-religionists in zeal for their faith. Certain it is that no Mohammedan people has ever

produced men who surpassed many of the followers of the Prophet among his own countrymen, not only in sincerity of faith and intensity of zeal, but in piety, and the virtues of a blameless life; while the great reformation of the Wahabys, who have been justly called "the Protestants, even the Puritans, of Mohammedanism," has been wholly confined to the Arab race. And this leads us to consider more particularly this remarkable movement.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE WAHABYS.

ABOUT a hundred and thirty years ago, there appeared in Central Arabia an earnest and zealous Mohammedan reformer, Abd el Wahab by name. As the result of his preaching, there sprung up, in the course of half a century, not only a new, widely extended, and most important Mohammedan sect, but an independent and powerful state. This Wahaby kingdom comprised for a time the whole of Arabia, except Yemen, Hadramaut, and Oman, upon the southern coast; and for its vigor, the liberality of its internal policy, its universal and even-handed justice, and the statesmanlike character of its government, has rarely been surpassed in the East. With a single and brief interruption, this state has now existed for more than three-quarters of a century, and still retains a considerable share of its early vitality and power. Yet, so entirely has it been secluded by its location in the recesses of Central Arabia, so completely cut off from all connection with the outer world, that there are very many intelligent persons who have never heard even its name.

But isolated as it is from all connection with the nations of the West, to the thoughtful student of the present condition and future prospects of the several peoples of South-western Asia, this political sect and theocratic state presents a subject of great interest, as affording a new and striking evidence of the vigor and capabilities of the Arab race, and its adaptedness for a higher civilization.

As has been already observed, the great interior highland country of Nedjd was an unknown land to Europeans until the present century. Burckhardt seems to have been the first to reveal the fact that it was a populous, well-cultivated, and settled region; and, in 1819, Capt. Sadlier of the British army crossed it from sea to sea, the first modern European by whom it had ever been seen. It has since been visited by other travellers, most recently by Mr. Palgrave, and it is now comparatively well known.

Of the political and social condition of Nedjd before the rise of the Wahabys, but little more can be said than what is contained in the following short passage from Burckhardt: "Nedjd, which became the principal seat of the Wahaby power, was divided into a number of small territories, cities, and villages, totally independent of each other, and constantly engaged in warfare. No law but that of the strongest was acknowledged either in the open country, or within the walls of towns; and personal security was always purchased at the price of individual property. Besides this, the wild freedom of the neighboring

Bedouin tribes, their endless wars and predatory expeditions, rendered Nedjd and the surrounding country a scene of perpetual disorder and bloodshed." [1] It would seem that up to this time the settled Arabs of Nedjd had remained in the same state of lawless and unrestricted freedom, and had retained the same customs and usages, including the right of protection and blood-revenge, as the wandering tribes.

It was just before the middle of the last century, that Abd el Wahab appeared in Central Arabia as a religious teacher and reformer. He was a man of thoughtful and earnest mind ; and, like many others of a similar character among his countrymen, he had travelled far, visiting the most sacred places, and the most renowned teachers of his faith, in the hope of more clearly learning the truth. The result of his observations was the deep conviction that the whole Mohammedan world had wandered very far from the primitive simplicity of its faith. The people everywhere adored the Prophet with almost divine honors ; and in their pilgrimages to tombs and other so-called sacred places, and their worship of departed sheikhs and saints, they were hardly behind the degenerate Christians of their neighborhood. Worse than this, the laxity of morals had become most deplorable. The precepts of the Koran were shamelessly disregarded. The very caravans of pilgrims on the road to Mecca, and even the sacred city itself, were disgraced by notorious licentiousness and debauchery. In short,

[1] Notes, vol. ii. p. 117.

Abd el Wahab seems to have returned from his travels feeling very much as Luther felt after his journey to Rome. The evils which afflicted society and the cause of religion were crying and terrible. It was high time for some preacher of righteousness to arise to bring back the degenerate people to the simplicity and purity of their faith. This was all that Abd el Wahab sought to do. He preached no new doctrine, but simply took his stand upon the Koran, the Sunne (or received traditions), and the best Moslem commentators, and preached a reformation of religion and of life.

His success at first was small. The people paid little heed to his preaching; and not until he had made a convert of Mohammed Ibn Saoud, the chief man of Derayeh, did his sect take root, and begin to flourish. But, this important acquisition once secured, the same thing happened which is always happening among the floating populations of both the South and the North of Asia. Abd el Wahab took his ground firmly upon the doctrine of the Koran, that it is the duty of true believers to propagate their faith by the sword; and no sooner was a strong nucleus formed, and booty to be hoped for, than followers and adherents began to flock in from all quarters. Mohammed Ibn Saoud thus found himself very soon in the position of a powerful chief. After his death, his son Abd el Azyz pushed forward the movement with so much zeal and success, that he extended his faith and his power over the whole of Nedjd.

Thus established, he felt strong enough to proclaim himself the head of an independent state, and of the Wahaby faith.

Abd el Azyz was assassinated in 1803, and was succeeded by his son Saoud. In his short reign of nine years, Saoud gave organization and political coherence to the new state, and raised it to its highest pitch of greatness and power. He subdued the whole of Arabia, excepting the southern coast. Mecca and Medina passed under his sway; and the pilgrim caravans of the orthodox Mussulmans, regarded by the Wahabys as a disgrace to their faith, were long interrupted. The great tribe of the Anazeh, and part, at least, of the Shammar, received his faith, and acknowledged his authority. In a word, almost the whole Arabic race in Arabia and Asiatic Turkey was united under a single able and warlike sovereign, and with a vigor and completeness of political organization which had never been known in Arabia, even in the days of the early Caliphs.

Saoud must be regarded as one of the most remarkable men ever produced by the Arab race. He was evidently a firm believer in the faith which he preached, practised, and promulgated with the sword. He was deeply versed in Mohammedan lore, and accounted a more learned man than any of the doctors of his Ulima; and whether we regard him as the founder of a state, a legislator, or a ruler, we must admit him to a place among the great men of history. Though at the head of a powerful military

government, he appears never in the least degree to have encroached upon the legitimate freedom of his subjects. He required of them no more than to obey the laws of the Koran, in rendering military service, paying tithes, observing regularly the services of religion, and abstaining from violence and wrong. In all other respects, he left them just as free as before. The great principle of separating the judicial from the executive branch of government, he understood well, and carried out to the fullest extent, except as the two were united in his own person. Leaving the sheikhs in their places, and with greatly increased powers, he allowed them to exercise no judicial function. Learned and disinterested kadis or judges, paid from the public treasury, were everywhere appointed; and their decisions the sheikhs were bound to enforce. Robbery and theft were everywhere suppressed; and, when the thief could not be discovered, the people among whom the crime had been committed were compelled to make good the loss. The result was the universal prevalence of quiet and good order throughout his dominions. The people lay down to sleep at night with no fear that their cattle would be stolen before morning; and a single merchant, with his camel's load of merchandise, could travel in safety from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. His bitterest enemies admitted that his justice was impartial and inexorable, and that his word was as inviolable as the truth itself. If any of his people rebelled against him, as they often did

when first subdued, for the first offence he came upon them suddenly, and laid waste their territory; for the second, he confiscated all their possessions, and committed them partly to new men whom he could trust, partly to their former possessors, at a stipulated rent or tribute. In this way he acquired immense estates in every part of his dominions. But though greedy of gain, and increasingly so in his later years, he seems never to have been charged with inflicting any kind of punishment upon any man not in conformity with the law. The duty of military service, as it is prescribed in the Koran, he strictly enforced. His people were all held bound to attend him at every summons, mounted upon a horse or camel, and supplied with provisions for forty or sixty days. He usually made two or three expeditions every year; and, as he almost always contrived to take his enemies by surprise, they were attended with almost invariable success. Liberal terms and a safe conduct, always sacredly observed, were granted to all who surrendered; but with true Oriental ferocity, all overcome with arms in their hands were put to the sword. This practice made their mode of warfare appear very terrible in the eyes of the Turks. The strictest police regulations were observed in his armies and camps; and riot and disorder were almost unknown. After the surrender of Mecca, the people of the city were surprised and delighted to find the most perfect order and security everywhere prevailing. Soldiers were even seen running about with lost articles, seeking for their owners.

There was, however, a darker side to the picture. The lower class of the Wahabys were little else than a set of fierce and ignorant fanatics; and, having but little intelligent understanding of the doctrines of their faith, they were but too ready to wage an exterminating war upon all who did not belong to their sect. All tombs and other places held sacred in the eyes of orthodox Mohammedans were the especial objects of their destructive fury. The tomb of Mohammed himself, at Medina, was doomed to destruction, but escaped because too solidly built to be thrown down by their weak hands.

Whenever a place surrendered to Saoud, he required on the part of the whole population the strictest observance of the regular religious services enjoined in the Koran. All unlawful indulgences were prohibited, especially smoking; although this practice still continued in private, as Saoud would have no spying into the secrets of the houses of the faithful. Throughout all his dominions, even among the wandering tribes of the desert, there appeared the edifying spectacle of a constant and zealous observance of the forms of religion.

Nor was Saoud satisfied with this alone. He labored zealously to make his people intelligent worshippers of the God of the Koran. Schools were everywhere established, and teachers were sent even to the Bedouin tribes. In the larger towns and cities a high degree of intellectual activity prevailed. Very considerable libraries were collected; and a large class

of men learned in Arabic lore and the Mohammedan law was gradually formed. Saoud himself was a diligent student, and was said by his friends to pass much of his time in study.

He was exceedingly simple and unostentatious in his manners, requiring no one to rise in his presence, and allowing every one to address him as familiarly as if he had been a common man; and yet so great was his personal ascendency, and so firmly established his authority in every part of his dominions, that a single negro slave from his household could arrest and lead away the most powerful sheikh from the midst of his followers. Had Saoud lived, the Egyptian invasion would probably have come to a very different issue. He died of a fever in 1814, after Mohammed Ali Pasha of Egypt had already landed in Hedjaz, and occupied Medina and Mecca. His son Abdallah succeeded him, but proved poorly qualified to fill his father's place.

The occupation of the two sacred cities by the rebellious and heretical Wahabys was most galling to the pride of the Turks; and, as early as 1804, the Sultan had laid his positive commands upon Mohammed Ali to rescue these cities, and open the caravan road. The pasha was not ready to fulfil this commission until 1811. In the autumn of that year he landed at Yembo, and succeeded with no great difficulty in occupying the two sacred cities. The tedious history of the war which followed, and which finally resulted in what seemed the complete and final de-

struction of the Wahaby state, may be dismissed in few words. The pasha's efforts to penetrate the interior met with little success until the enterprise was intrusted to his able and since famous son, Ibrahim Pasha. What this commander could not have accomplished by the valor of his troops, he effected by intrigue and bribery. One tribe after another was detached from the Wahaby government, until its strength had almost wholly wasted away. At last, without a battle, Derayeh was taken and destroyed, and the conquests of Ibrahim were extended to the Persian Gulf.

The Turks were naturally jubilant at their success, and thought they had made an end of the hated Wahabys. They soon learned their mistake. The Egyptians could not hold the country which they had overrun; and no sooner was the army of Ibrahim Pasha removed than the Wahabys again raised their heads. Feysûl, another son of Saoud, who seems to have inherited a large share of his father's ability, and who had been accounted the handsomest man in Derayeh, succeeded his brother Abdallah, and was still reigning over the Wahaby kingdom in 1865, in a green and vigorous old age.

Hedjaz was not recovered, and the Turks still performed the pilgrimage to Mecca in peace ; but, over all the wide regions of central and eastern Arabia, Feysûl seems to have reigned in quiet and well-established authority. Derayeh was not rebuilt, and Riad was made the capital. Mr. Palgrave and others who have

visited this city found it a thriving and populous place; its markets filled with the commodities of a large and lucrative trade, and with every variety of provisions, which were at once abundant, excellent, and very cheap; and its streets with a motley but seemingly happy, industrious, and orderly population. The old strictness of the Wahaby doctrine and practice was still preserved: there was constant preaching in the mosques; and the whole population was required to be diligent in attendance at the regular hours of prayer. A rigid censorship, if Mr. Palgrave can be trusted,[1] of more than Puritanic austerity, was maintained over the external morals of the public. "True, lights are extinguished an hour or so after sunset, and street-walking is rigorously prohibited; while, in the daytime, not even a child may play by the roadside, not a man may laugh out. True, profane instruments of music disturb not the sacred hum of Coranic lectures, and no groups of worldly mirth offend serious eyes in the market-place." But he goes on to say that, under this enforced Pharisaical exterior, there is concealed a terrible amount of private wickedness and vice. We must remember, however, that Mr. Palgrave was at this time a Jesuit Roman Catholic, and, as such, had a special abhorrence for Puritanism in every form. The same hypocrisy and hidden corruption was charged upon the English Puritans, with how much of truth we know.

[1] It is to be regretted that Mr. Palgrave's statements are not in all cases to be depended upon.

Doubtless there was no lack of hidden wickedness at Riad; but no governmental authority could have enforced this universal austerity. It must have been in accordance with the public feeling, must have been sustained by public sentiment. There can be no doubt that the Wahaby movement was a genuine reformation, springing from sincere convictions, and sustained by an honest and earnest faith.

What further destiny awaits this singular power, no one, of course, can divine. Its future existence may be brief; it may have no important part to play in the onward march of events. Under a single incompetent and profligate sovereign it might be wholly dissolved, and leave the old anarchy to reign again in Central Arabia. Yet to the thoughtful observer of the great movements now in progress, and soon to advance with yet greater rapidity among the nations of the East, this secluded government of a Mohammedan and barbarian people is invested with the deepest interest. For it makes plain to us the high qualities and large capabilities of the Arabic race, and the fitness of that race, under a better civilization, to play a great part in the future history of mankind. It also proves conclusively the fact, which many have regarded with utter unbelief, that the Arabs can be made to submit cheerfully to a vigorous and efficient government which, while not encroaching upon their ancient and passionately loved freedom, accomplishes fairly and reasonably the great ends for which governments exist.

The late Prof. Silliman used to say, that when a medical student at Philadelphia he frequently saw large blocks of anthracite coal lying unused and seemingly good for nothing; and wondered for what purpose those immense deposits of seemingly useless material could have been made. A very similar feeling has prevailed throughout the Christian world, in regard to the Arabs. They have seemed a wild and untamable race, whose turbulent freedom could be restrained by no authority, could be subjected to no law; their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them; the obstinate, irreclaimable enemies of the rest of mankind. Men have sometimes asked themselves despairingly, what could ever be done with or for such a race, or what better fate could be in store for them than the gradual extermination which has befallen the North American Indians.

The facts now before us show how entirely erroneous is such an impression. We have seen that the Arabs are in reality one of the noblest races of the human family; and that under favoring circumstances they have never failed to manifest a rapid development, and to show their aptitude for the highest and noblest forms of social life.

It surely is not without a purpose, that this widespread and powerful race has been kept, these four thousand years, unsubdued and undegenerate, preserving still the primitive vigor and simplicity of its character. It is certainly capable of a great future; and as certainly a great future lies before it. It may

be among the last of the peoples of South-western Asia to yield to the transforming influences of Christianity and a Christian civilization. But to those influences it will assuredly yield in the fulness of time; and then it will take the high place it is fitted to occupy among the free and Christian nations of the earth.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ALI-WORSHIP. — THE DRUZES.

HAVING thus completed our survey of the Arabs and their religion, it remains to notice briefly a singular outgrowth of Mohammedanism found in several tribes of North-western Syria, which for many centuries have formed a large numerical element in the population of that region, and with which our missionaries there are brought continually in contact. These tribes are the Druzes, the Metewalies, the Nusairîyeh (pronounced Nu-sai-re-ye), and Ismailîyeh. Totally unlike one another in almost every other respect, these tribes or sects all agree in this, that they worship Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law, and the fourth of the Caliphs, with divine honors, placing him far above Mohammed himself. The Druzes will first claim our attention ; and, in tracing their origin as a religious sect, we shall find a full explanation of that Ali-worship, which for so many centuries, and in so many different forms, has prevailed in Western Asia.

The murderous conflicts which during the past thirty years have repeatedly devastated Mount Leba-

non have brought the Druzes before the civilized world with a sad and painful prominence. The story of these terrible struggles, however, one of the darkest chapters in the history of the Turkish Empire, would be more appropriately told in connection with the Maronites. Our present concern is only with the Druzes themselves.

The sect and religion of the Druzes present one of the strangest phenomena to be found in all the history of mankind. In this singular tribe we see a people who for six hundred years have persisted, in spite of the enmity of the world, and often of the fiercest persecution, in worshipping one of the maddest, vilest, and most profligate tyrants who ever disgraced a throne; and, strangest of all, while worshipping with divine honors this obscene monster, their religion has always been characterized by a severe and even ascetic morality.

At the breaking-up of the great Empire founded by the immediate successors of Mohammed, a man claiming descent from Ali, the husband of Mohammed's daughter Fatima, obtained possession of the throne of Cairo, and became the first of the Fatimite Caliphs of Egypt. In the year 1008, Hakem, the third of the Fatimite Caliphs, ascended the Egyptian throne. He was a frantic youth, whose reign has been justly described as a wild mixture of vice and folly. At first he declared himself a zealous Mohammedan; and, together with the strangest and most tyrannical oppressions of his Moslem subjects, he

visited with relentless persecution the followers of other religions. But ere long the idea seized his fantastic brain, of becoming the founder of a new religion. He accordingly proclaimed himself the visible image and incarnation of the Most High God, and required every knee throughout his dominions to bow in humble adoration at the name of Hakem, the Lord of the living and the dead. Character and form were given to this most absurd of all the freaks of despotic power, by the ability of his imam, Hamzé; and, incredible as it may appear, the new religion took root and spread in Morocco, in Syria, in Persia, and even in India.

Hakem died in 1025; and under his successors, who spared no pains to root out this odious heresy, the sect disappeared from all places except the mountain fastnesses of Southern Lebanon. There it had obtained a hold which has never been shaken; and to this day the tribe of the Druzes, according to the ordinance of Hakem, bow in humble adoration at his name, as the Lord of the living and the dead. In the worship of this mad and atrocious tyrant, not only have they endured and suffered all things: they have developed a subtle metaphysical creed, and both inculcate and practice what, for such a people, seems a singularly high-toned morality.

The Druzes long remained an incomprehensible puzzle to the civilized world. Recent investigations, however, have thrown a light upon this subject which clears it in great measure of its mystery.

After the death of Mohammed, his son-in-law, the valiant and chivalrous Ali, his earliest convert excepting his wife Ḳhadijah, and his lifelong and devoted friend, seemed plainly marked as his rightful successor. But Ali was wayward and imperious; and the Moslem leaders were not inclined to submit to his authority. He was passed by, and Abubeker was girded with the sword of office. A second and third time the claims of Ali were disregarded; and not until the twenty-fourth year after the death of Mohammed, and as the successor of both Omar and Othman, was he at last raised to supreme power. His success, however, was destined to prove more unfortunate than his previous failures. His reign was a constant struggle with rebels and rivals; and he soon fell by the hand of an assassin. But the generous and brilliant qualities of Ali had inspired a large party among the faithful with a passionate devotion to his person. The slights put upon their favorite inspired this party with fierce resentment, and led to a great and permanent schism of the Moslem world. The Shiites (sectaries) of Persia raised Ali almost to an equality with Mohammed himself. They held, that, while the latter was the Prophet, Ali was the Vicar of God, and paid him honors hardly less than divine. They bitterly cursed the usurpers who had thrust themselves into the high and sacred office which of right belonged to him. Nor was this all. Out of this love and reverence for Ali there soon sprung up the powerful sect of the Batenians,

who held the doctrine of a hidden meaning in the words of the Koran ; and that in Ali, and his sacred line, there dwelt a portion of the divine essence.

To this sect belonged Hamzé, the able and crafty imam of Hakem, the third Egyptian Caliph of the line of Ali and Fatima. Hamzé had thus already laid to his hand a strong foundation for his new religion. It will be observed further, that the successes of Hakem's imposture were won chiefly in distant regions, where little was known of him except that he was a Caliph of the sacred line of Ali, and where his insanest acts could be readily covered with some mystic or allegorical veil.

Long before the time of Hakem, several Arab tribes had settled in southern Lebanon and its neighborhood. To them Hamzé sent as a missionary a man named Neshtakeen Darazi, who gathered about him many followers, and from whom the Druzes derive their name. Darazi, however, elated with success, began to put on airs. He claimed to be the head of the sect ; and, in order to gain converts, indulged his followers in the most licentious practices. Indignant at this treachery, Hamzé procured the assassination of Darazi, and sent Moktana Baha-ed-Din to take his place. Moktana appears to have been a man of strict morality, and no little ability. His numerous writings form both the theology and the literature of the Druzes. The old leaven of Darazi, however, still remained ; and a small party of the Druzes still receive and practise his licentious

teachings. After the death of Hakem, Hamzé disappeared; but the Druzes believe that he will re-appear as a great conqueror in China, where they imagine that their sect now exists in immense numbers. The persecutions to which the Druzes were subjected soon reduced them to great distress, and compelled them to practise their religious rites in secret. Upon his dying bed, Moktana declared the world unworthy of the grace bestowed upon it, pronounced the door of salvation closed, and directed his followers to make no more converts.

The difficulties which beset the Druzes at this time not only led them to practise their own peculiar rites in secret, while outwardly conforming to Moslem usages, but to exercise the most scrupulous care as to whom they admitted to a knowledge of their mysteries. Hence arose the two classes among them, — the Akkal, or initiated; and the Jehal, or uninstructed. The Jehal are very ignorant, and have hardly any religious training or observances. They are taught to conform outwardly to the usages of the people among whom they dwell, so that they seem to be Mohammedans among Mohammedans, and Christians among Christians. But this compliance is only in seeming. The bond which holds them to the faith of their fathers is, in reality, very strong. Our missionaries have almost always found them proof against their teaching; and very few converts have ever been made from their number. The Akkal are the governing class. They are well instructed in the doctrines

of their faith, and very strict in their religious observances, which they perform in secret. They abstain from profanity, will not eat with strangers, and never marry out of their own order. They rival the Kûrds in their respect for women; and some of their princesses hold positions of great authority and influence. The women of their enemies are usually safe at their hands, even upon the field of battle. They scorn the practice of their Mohammedan neighbors, of making female captives the victims of their lust.

The tie of brotherhood which binds the Druzes together is exceedingly strong. In every war of religion or of race, they stand as one man; and violence is rarely done by one Druze to another. Some time ago two Druzes of Kunawât, the ancient Kenath, were travelling together, when one of them killed the other for the sake of the money which he had with him. No sooner was the fact known in Kunawât than the whole population turned out in pursuit of the murderer. Finding him at last, after a patient pursuit of months, they brought him back, and burned him alive on the spot where the crime was committed.[1] But they have no such keen sense of justice in regard to crimes committed against strangers. At this very place Mr. Porter saw a Druze who had killed a Christian in cold blood, yet seemed to be esteemed just as highly as before. In this, however, the Druzes are not at all peculiar. From the ancient Greek citizen, to the Hindoo villager of to-day, the whole moral

[1] Porter's Five Years in Damascus, vol. ii. p. 118.

sphere of peoples at their stage of social development seems to have been restricted to their own village, city, or tribe. However virtuous and exemplary they may have been within these narrow limits, they seem to have been conscious of no moral relation, duty, or responsibility, except as the result of compacts or engagements voluntarily entered into, towards those outside of them; so that to make war upon, to rob, or even to destroy, the people of a neighboring city or tribe, has hardly ever appeared to them unjust or wrong.[1]

The traveller in the East meets with very few persons who impress him more favorably than many of the Druzes of the higher class. They are frank, brave, manly, and dignified; they are courteous, generous, and hospitable to the last degree. With both their Christian and Moslem neighbors, they lived for centuries upon terms of remarkable harmony and good-will. Especially they regarded the Christians of the Syrian Greek Church resident among them as almost a part of their own party. But recent events have shown, that, under this usual gentleness and kindliness, there lay hidden the inborn ferocity of

[1] For many most instructive illustrations of this truth among the country people of India, see Sir Henry Sleeman's "Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official." A due appreciation of this universal characteristic of half-civilized peoples will help us to understand many things otherwise incomprehensible in the Old Testament. Among other points, it will explain to us why neither David nor any of his contemporaries saw any thing wrong in his conduct when he "went up and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites, . . . and saved neither man nor woman alive to bring tidings to Gath" (2 Sam. xxvii. 8–11).

their Semitic birth, and that, their fury and thirst for blood once aroused, they could become the veriest tigers in human form.

The Druzes are about one hundred thousand in number. Their chief seat is in Southern Lebanon; but there are many of them in Anti-Lebanon, in the neighborhood of Mount Hermon, and beyond the mountains in the Hauran, the ancient Bashan. The chief Sheikh of the Druze religion resides at Kunawât (Kenath) in the Hauran.

At first the Druzes lived under their own emirs; but Sultan Noureddin introduced among them, with feudal jurisdiction, the Mohammedan family of Mâân. After a time the Mâân emirs became the real rulers of all Western Syria, from Antioch to Gaza. They paid their tribute through commissioners sent down to receive it, and in other respects were virtually independent. About the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Mâân family became extinct; and the Druzes called the famous Shehab family to fill their place. The Shehabs belonged to the Arabic tribe of Koreish, and were thus of the kindred of the Prophet. When they first migrated from the neighborhood of Mecca, authorities are not agreed; but they had been established in the Hauran and Anti-Lebanon from the times of Sultan Noureddin, who bestowed upon them a principality in the neighborhood of Hasbeiya. In the year 1855 the Emir Said-ed-Din of Hasbeiya was the head of the house, the

famous Emir Beshir Shehab being but a junior member of the family. In the Lebanon, the Shehab emirs had neither feudal jurisdiction nor retainers, and were supported only by such forces, both Druze and Maronite, as they were able to gather about them. Their capital was Deir-el-Kamar, in the heart of the Druze district. The whole of the Druze territory was the feudal possession of five great Druze families, of which the most important was the house of Jumblatt, having its seat at Muchtara. The second in power and influence was the house of Abou Nakad, to which Deir-el-Kamar belonged. The tragic events in which, but a few years ago, these great Druze families and their Shehab emirs were brought before the public with so terrible a prominence, may be hereafter related in connection with the history of the Maronites.

Since the pacification of the Lebanon, under the comparatively wise and efficient administration of Daoud Pasha, who is not a Turk, but an Armenian Catholic, the Druzes have shared in the mental and social awakening which has begun to appear among all the peoples in that part of Syria. This fact is clearly manifest in their deep and growing desire for the education of their children. They have now many excellent schools sustained by themselves, most of which are in the charge of teachers trained in the schools connected with our missions. The Druzes are genuine Arabs, comparatively free from the vices

which have degraded so many of the settled Arabs of Syria; and the noble qualities of their race will yet give them a prominent and important place in the destinies of Western Asia.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE METEWALIES, THE NUSAIRÎYEH, AND THE ISMAILÎYEH.

THE Metewalies are another strange tribe and religious sect, having their stronghold in the mountains of Northern Syria, and numbering some twenty-five or thirty thousand souls. They are Shiite, or Ali worshipping, Mohammedans of the straitest sect, and probably came, — when, no one can tell, — from the region of the lower Euphrates. The most singular thing about them is said to be their close resemblance to the Jews, not only in personal appearance, but in their rules of ceremonial cleanness and purification. These rules are incredibly severe; and by them they are cut off from all intercourse with their neighbors of whatever religion. They will not eat or drink with them, will not allow them, if they can help it, to enter their houses, or even to touch an article of their merchandise. They are, in a word, the most rigorous, the most hateful, and the most villanous of Mohammedans. Dr. Thomson describes them as a sallow, forlorn, ill-conditioned generation, every way inferior to their Christian neighbors, and,

with all their notions of ceremonial purity, so exceedingly filthy in their habits, that it costs little self-denial to keep clear of them.[1] They hate all their neighbors, and are as cordially hated by them in return. They seem always ready for any low villany; and it is said, that, during the massacres in the mountains, they followed like hungry wolves in the track of the more high-minded Druzes, to rob and violate the women whom the latter had spared.

The house of Harfûsh is the head of this tribe. The emirs of this house have their seat at Baalbek, and have long been the actual masters of the whole region of Northern Anti-Lebanon. Too inefficient to reduce it to subjection, the Turks have outlawed the members of this family, and are seeking to effect its extermination.

THE NUSAIRÎYEH.

The Nusairîyeh are another strange and singular tribe; perhaps the strangest and most peculiar of the many odd, outlandish peoples found here and there in the curious jumble which makes up the population of Asiatic Turkey. They number, perhaps, one hundred and fifty thousand, occupy the mountains around the north-east corner of the Mediterranean Sea, and are found mingled with the other tribes and races of Western Syria, all the way from Scanderoon to Tripoli. They are called also, though incorrectly, Ansairîyeh, Ansarians, and Ansars. Though living

[1] The Land and the Book, vol. i. pp. 283–287.

upon the borders of the Mediterranean, and thus at the very doors of Europe, they have remained until recently as thoroughly unknown, except as to the fact of their existence, as if their home had been in the heart of Africa. Socially, they are the most depressed people, excepting the gypsies, to be found in the Turkish Empire. Every thing pertaining to their religion and their history they keep a profound secret; and any one of their number who should divulge any thing upon these subjects would, if within their reach, be at once assassinated.

Dr. Thomson relates the following as one of his many fruitless efforts to penetrate the mystery of their religious belief. He was travelling through their country with a number of companions, among whom was a physician, when they met a company of the Nusairîyeh with their sheikh at their head. The sheikh approached, and respectfully asked for medicine. Dr. Thomson inquired who the people were, living upon the hills above them. The sheikh replied, —

"Oh! they are fellaheen" (peasant farmers).

"I know that very well; but what is their religion?"

"Religion! What need have fellaheen of religion?"

"Certainly, everybody has some sort of religion; and so have you, I am sure. What is it? Whom do you follow? What prophet do you love?"

"We rather love Ali. But whom do *you* follow?"

"We are Christians; we love Jesus Christ, and our religion is contained in the New Testament."

"Very well; we also love Jesus Christ, and curse Mohammed. We and you are one."

"No, no: you are not Christians."

"Why not? We love Christ and Moses: your religion and ours are exactly the same."

The sheikh then snatched up his medicine, and hurried away.[1]

Though speaking the Arabic language, the Nusairîyeh are plainly not Arabs; and who or what they could be has been a puzzling ethnological question. Some have supposed, that, like the Metewalies, they had migrated originally from Southern Mesopotamia. But Dr. Thomson and Dr. Van Dyck are both convinced that we see in this strange people a relic of the ancient Canaanites. "Many things led me," says Dr. Thomson, "to suspect that they were fragments of Syria's most ancient inhabitants; descendants of those sons of Canaan who were in possession of Arka, Arvad, Zimra, and Sin, on the shore west of their mountains, and of Hamath on the east, when Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldees. Expelled by foreign nations from their primitive seats, they retired to the inaccessible mountains where they now live. These are so situated that they were never penetrated by any great military roads or mercantile routes, and never will be. Perhaps many of their brethren, when driven from the south by Joshua, took refuge with them. I was struck with the prevalence,

[1] For much interesting information respecting the Nusairîyeh, see *The Land and the Book*, vol. i. pp. 242, 248, 340–343.

all over these mountains, of names of men and mountains, and castles and villages, which were identical with those once common in Palestine." [1]

The Nusairîyeh remained thus veiled in impenetrable mystery, until the year 1863, when a singular book made its appearance at Beirût, which if its statements are to be relied upon, as our missionaries in Syria believe they are, places the whole subject of the faith and religious observances of this strange people before us in a clear light. Sulaimān, the author of this book, according to his own account of himself, was a Nusairy by birth, and was, in due time, initiated into all the mysteries of the religion of his people; but, dissatisfied with its teachings, he afterwards apostatized, becoming first a Jew, and then a Christian. His book claims to set forth a complete account of the religious organization of the Nusairîyeh, and the rites of initiation to their mysteries. It gives in full their forms of prayer, together with many incidental explanations of various points connected with their history and religious usages. This little treatise was immediately forwarded, in the original Arabic, to the American Oriental Society, by Dr. Van Dyck, and was published with an English translation, in the Eighth Volume of the Society's Journal, by Prof. Salisbury.

This account of the long-hidden religion of a people so unique and peculiar is, if trustworthy, for many reasons, of very great interest; and, as Prof.

[1] The Land and the Book, vol. i. p. 342.

Salisbury's article is not generally accessible, a somewhat extended account of the Nusairîan faith, condensed from that article, may be acceptable to the intelligent reader.

According to Sulaimān, the sect derives its name from Mohammed Ben Nusair, the primitive apostle of its faith. When he lived, or where he taught, does not appear. In its principal features the Nusairîan religion is an outgrowth of Mohammedanism. It is a worship of Ali, whom the Nusairîyeh hold to have been an incarnation of the one eternal and infinite God. But at the same time, like the religion of the Yezidees, it contains shreds and patches from almost every form of faith that has ever prevailed in Western Asia.

Their sacred books teach that before Ali, God had already been incarnate in Abel, Seth, Joseph, Joshua, and several other men, besides some memorable animals, as the cow, which Moses offered in sacrifice; but, to them, Ali Ibn Abu Taleb (the son of Abu Taleb) is the proper name, almost the only name, of God. As an "Intermediary," that is, Mediator or Messiah, Ali created Mohammed, who was the same, in his incarnate Messiahship, with all the prophets who had gone before him. He formed him "out of the light of his essence, and called him his excellence, his self, his throne, and his seat, and named him with his own attributes, who is connected with him, not separated from him, . . . so that Mohammed is of him, as the soul's feeling is of the soul, or as the

rays of the sun are of the sun. . . . And if Ali Ibn Abu Taleb wills to be manifested, he manifests him; or, if he wills to be hidden, he hides him under the effusions of his light." [1]

Mohammed in turn created Salmân al Farsi, the Communicator, the bearer of his revelation, and the representative of order and truth. These three divine beings constitute the Nusairîan trinity; and the initial letters of their three names, A M S, form a cabalistic word which figures largely in their ritual; "the mystery of the A M S," standing for their whole system of doctrine. As the Intermediary had been incarnate in all the prophets before Mohammed, so the Communicator had been incarnate in all the mothers of the prophets. Salmân al Farsi created the Five Incomparables, who created and govern the lower world.

The transmigration of souls is a fundamental doctrine of the Nusairîyeh. They believe that they originally "existed as moving lights and luminous stars, conscious of the distinction between obedience and disobedience; and neither eating, drinking, nor excreting, but beholding Ali Ibn Abu Taleb in sapphire splendor; that they remained in this condition seven thousand and seventy-seven years and seven hours; and that then they boasted of themselves, saying, "Surely he has created no nobler creatures than we are," which was the beginning of their going astray.[2] By this growth in them of a vain conceit,

[1] Nusairian Prayer. See Prof. Salisbury's article, p. 245. [2] Idem, p. 286.

they became estranged from Ali, who cast them down into a mundane sphere, and created an Intermediary for them. But, in this new sphere of existence, they wandered still farther from Ali, until of their wickedness he made devils. And then, of the evil doings of the devils, he made women, who are thus the embodiment of all evil. They believe that at death the true Nusairy will become again a star of light. The souls of all other human beings pass, at death, into the bodies of various animals, according to their character. Moslem sheikhs become asses, Christian doctors are changed into swine, and Jewish rabbis re-appear as male apes.

The Nusairîyeh are divided into four sects; the first of which, called Northerners, worship the heavens as the visible manifestation of Ali; the second, called Kalazians, worship the moon, for the same reason; the third adore the twilight; and the fourth, the air. Among the Kalazian sheikhs, conjugal communism is considered a law of hospitality, as among some Arab tribes; but, with this exception, it does not appear that the Nusairîyeh are more immoral than their neighbors.[1]

If Sulaimān has told us the truth, and the whole truth, about the religion of his people, it is of a far higher character morally and spiritually than we

[1] There is a small sect living about the castle of Kadmûs, and hence called Kadmusîyeh, whose religion, if it deserves the name, is of too vile a character to be here described; but these people, although living among the Nusairîyeh, appear to be a distinct sect.

could have supposed, and can hardly fail of a somewhat elevating effect upon the public mind. With many puerilities and absurdities, many things which are mystical and incomprehensible, and many bitter curses upon the enemies of their faith, there are passages in their forms of worship almost worthy of a Hebrew liturgy; ascriptions of praise to God, which might express the adoration of a truly devout soul. There are passages in their sacred poetry, which give no unworthy utterance to the inborn longings of the human soul for a nobler and purer life. The following may be given as an example of the Nusairîan prayers:—

"Let whatsoever is in the heavens, and whatsoever is in the earth, glorify God, the mighty, the wise! With the return of morning do we give glory; with the return of morning doth God's whole realm give glory. In the name of God, by the help of God, and in the faith of the mystery of lord Abu Abdallah, in the faith of the mystery of the chief of his peculiar children, drinkers from the sea of AMS, fifty-one in number, stationed at the gate of the city of Harran, receiving justly, and rendering justly, whose religion whosoever conforms to, and whose worship whosoever adopts, God brings them to the knowledge of himself; and whose religion whosoever does not conform to, and whose worship whosoever does not adopt, has God's curse upon him; by the mystery of the chief

and his peculiar children, by their mystery, may God give happiness to them all!" [1]

As an expression of the longings and aspirations of a poor, outcast, downtrodden people, the following passage from one of their sacred poems is not destitute of true simplicity and pathetic power: —

"At the remembrance of the time before my fall, my tears overflow, I sigh deeply, and cry out with a yearning and a longing which can never be satisfied. My heart is made sick with pain, and with my burning passion, because of the felicity of days whose glory is exchanged for humiliation, and security for fearfulness. We were in a sphere of glory, at the zenith of sublimity, coursing with angels in each green meadow, and quaffing from rivers choice water, pure honey and milk, with wine; while heaven and earth obeyed our bidding by the permission of a Deity who made all things created; and even the sovereign Deity (glory to his majesty!) gave consent to our imploring petitions. At length it pleased God, whose decree is final, to say, I shall cast you down to a mundane sphere, and manifest my being in an Intermediary of your kin, causing you to see my Intermediaries as one sees vapor on the plain, which the thirsty man thinks to be water, but, reaching it, finds nothing real. So, then, whosoever acknowledges me when I appear among you in an Intermediary, and

[1] Prof. Salisbury's article, p. 258.

distinguishes me from human kind, him will I secure from fear and trouble, and save from all alarm and affliction; he shall be restored speedily to his pristine state; and I will give him rest in the shade, on the green meadows of my garden.

"We acquiesced in the Merciful's words to us; and falling to the sphere of humiliation, after being exalted, have trod as prisoners within narrow bounds, therein abiding while ages have revolved. . . . Mohammed Kalazi, making invocation becomingly, cherishes hope; and I stand fast by the ancient covenant, abiding in the confession of the day of shadowing clouds." [1]

In these doctrines of the fall, the Intermediary, the Communicator, and the final restoration of the good, we evidently see a dim reflection of Christianity; and connected with these doctrines are rites which seem to be borrowed from the baptism and eucharist of the Christian Church.

Socially the Nusairîyeh are greatly depressed. They are poor and helpless, and, unlike the Druzes and Metewalies, have never made their power felt as a military people. They seem to desire to withdraw as completely as possible from all connection with other tribes. Morally, they seem to be neither better nor worse than their neighbors, excepting the Metewalies, to whom they are decidedly superior. They are ready enough to plunder when occasion offers, but do not deserve to be called vicious and thieving.

[1] Idem, p. 287.

They are evidently a people of a higher order and better character than had been supposed. Their religion is but a poor superstition, a debased, heathenized Mohammedanism: yet it is much that it still holds fast to the doctrine of one God, just and good, infinite and eternal. The Christian world is beginning to feel a new interest in this hitherto despised and almost unknown people. Let us hope that the time is coming when the God whom they ignorantly worship shall be declared unto them, and they shall learn to worship him in spirit and in truth.

THE ISMAILÎYEH.

This tribe, but a few thousands in number, is found blended with the Nusairîyeh in their southern districts, but is distinct from them. It is the miserable remnant of a sect famous and widely dreaded in the Middle Ages, when they were known as the Assassins, or followers of the Old Man of the Mountain. The sect had its original and principal seat in Persia, among the hills to the south of the Caspian Sea, where it existed in formidable power until it was exterminated by Holagou, the grandson of Ghengis Khan. The chief feature of their religion, a base compound of Mohammedanism and Hindoo superstition, was the absolute devotion of body and soul to their Imam, or head, called by the writers of the time, though incorrectly, the Old Man of the Mountain, whom they revered as the vicar of God. No man of eminence in Western Asia was safe from the

daggers of these miscreants; and many were the victims to their avarice, their resentment, or their fanatical zeal. A colony of these assassins, forty thousand strong, was established in the mountains of Lebanon above Tortosa, before the time of the crusaders, to whom they proved formidable and dangerous neighbors. This colony was extirpated by the Mamelukes about the year 1280; and but a few wretched and harmless survivors of this once powerful and dreaded sect now remain. It is from them that the word "*assassin*" has been introduced into the languages of modern Europe.[1]

[1] See Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. vi. p. 215.

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